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ERRATA.

(Corrected in some Impressions.)

P. 18, col. 1, line 18, *for* "the gate of the god II.," *read* "the god II."
P. 120, Title of Engraving, *for* "The Temple at Luscor," *read* "The Temple at Luxor."
P. 370, col. 1, 2nd line from bottom, *omit* the word "neighbouring" from before "territory."

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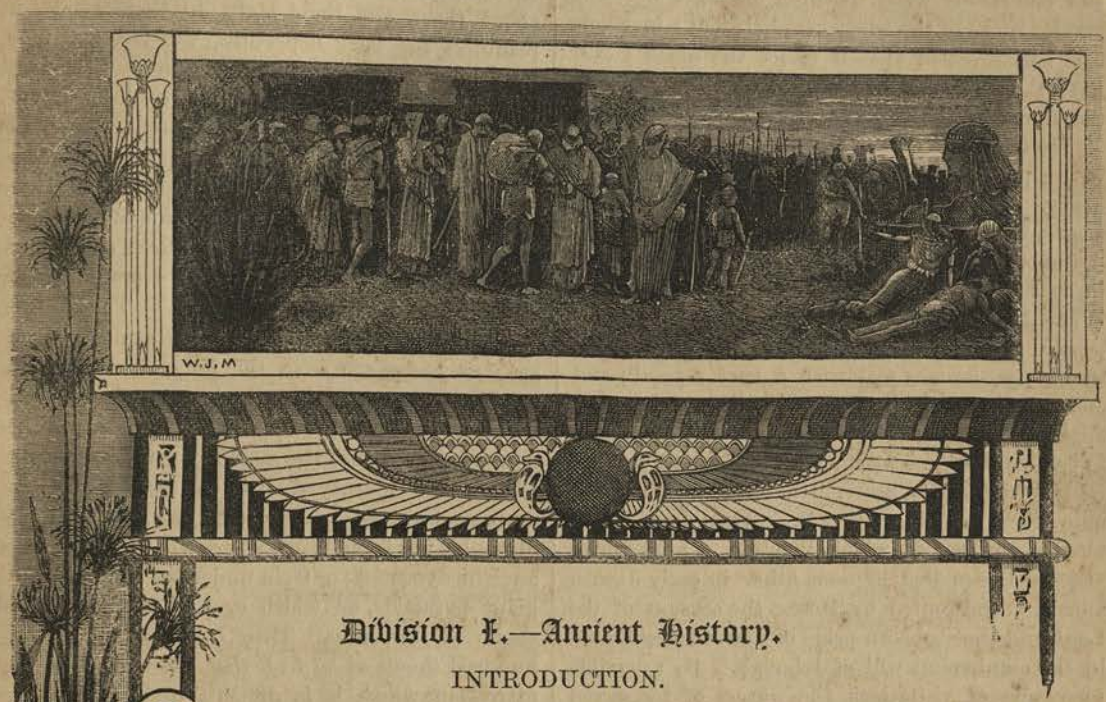


Division I.—Ancient History.

INTRODUCTION.

ON a certain night near the season of the vernal equinox, in a year which cannot be exactly stated, but which is popularly supposed to have been 1491 B.C., a band of fugitives stood on the shore of the Red Sea. They were a nation of slaves seeking to throw off the yoke of bondage, but a nation, too, whose moral influence over the world's history has never been surpassed, or even equalled. For many years they had lived, a hated colony, in Goshen, the frontier land of Egypt. The purity of their religious faith had become soiled; they assumed the dress and customs of the Egyptians. Still, they prospered greatly; their numbers rapidly increased; it became evident to their neighbours that a mighty people was springing into existence at their side. Accordingly, when "there arose up a new king over Egypt"—perhaps the great Rameses, whose ruthless, scornful features are yet to be seen set forth in colossal grandeur upon immortal stone—a new policy was adopted towards the strangers. By a systematic course of oppression, they were reduced to the condition of serfs. The benefits conferred in former years on Egypt by their ancestor Joseph were forgotten; the children of Israel were forced to build up for King Pharaoh great treasure-cities—Pithom and Raamses—beneath the scourge of the taskmaster; they were compelled to labour at all manner of service in the field, working like machines beneath the burning sun; the Egyptians, we read, "made their lives bitter with hard bondage." But, as the numbers of the people continued to increase, the despot commanded them to cast into the river every son that was born, but to keep alive every daughter. "And the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried; and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage" (Ex. ii. 23).

While in this condition of utter misery, from which there seemed no hope of escape, a prophet and deliverer appeared among them, gifted with majestic presence, who worked, through his brother Aaron, miracles with a rod, the humble instrument of divine power, that he might prove to them the truth of his assertion "that the Lord had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon

their affliction." This was Moses, the son of Amram, who had been saved from the threatened destruction, and had been brought up in the royal palace; who was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians; who had acquired strength of purpose and endurance when dwelling amongst the wild granite rocks of the wilderness of Sinai; to whom God had revealed himself under the name I AM THAT I AM, and had commanded him to go to the elders of the children of Israel with promises of rescue from present misfortunes, and of the future possession of a land flowing with milk and honey. As hope sprang up once more in their hearts, they bowed their heads, and worshipped.

But the time was not yet, and they were soon thrown back again into the lethargy of despair. When the prophet prayed the despot to let the people go to hold a feast unto the Lord in the wilderness, he was met with a curt refusal; and more work was laid on the Israelites, "that they might labour therein." Pharaoh was unwilling to believe the signs wrought by Moses and Aaron: God hardened his heart, "that he hearkened not unto them" (Ex., vii. 13). Then began that terrible contest, in which Pharaoh, a king whose majesty is equalled by none other in early Jewish annals, is confronted by Moses, the servant of the Lord, and the stubborn pride of man is overthrown by the omnipotent will of Jehovah. By a terrible succession of visitations, the waters of the sacred river were turned into blood; innumerable frogs came upon the people; the dust of the land became vermin on the persons of the Egyptians, a nation of scrupulous cleanliness; swarms of flies, or rather, perhaps, of scarabæus beetles, objects of religious veneration, corrupted the land; a murrain destroyed the cattle, sparing not the sacred bull, Apis; boils and blains, the awful black leprosy, broke out upon man and beast; a storm of hail destroyed all the servants and cattle of those who, in neglect of the divine warning, had left them exposed, and smote every herb of the field; the scanty remains of vegetation were devoured by an invading army of locusts, covering the face of the whole earth; and, as an earnest of a yet more dire affliction, a darkness "which might be felt" was in Egypt for three days, while "all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings." But still we are told "the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go out of his land" (Ex., xi. 10). He was warned that if he persisted in his obstinacy, all the firstborn of Egypt should die. On the tenth day of the month Abib or Nisan, Moses, by divine command, instituted the feast of the Passover, which his followers were to keep as an ordinance for ever, as a token of their deliverance from the blow that was to smite the Egyptians.

At the solemn hour of midnight, as the Israelites were consuming in haste the feast of the unblemished lamb, with their garments girt about them, and their staffs in their hands, in readiness for their departure, the last and most terrible plague fell on the Egyptians. "The Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh, that sat on his throne, unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle." There was a great cry in Egypt. The pride of the despot at last gave way; he called for Moses and Aaron, and bade them be gone, adding, as a proof that he was conquered, "and bless me also." The children of Israel assembled at the city of Raamses. Some perhaps had come from the holy city of On, so intimately connected with the history of their race, where was the great temple of the sun, and whither it was believed that the sacred phœnix came to die. Others had journeyed from a greater distance, perhaps from labours beneath the vast walls of Memphis; or from Tanis, where were the palaces of ancient dynasties; or from under the shadow of the giant pyramids, on which even then the sun had shone for centuries. They set out in haste, six hundred thousand on foot that were men—a vast migration, which it is difficult to picture to the mind. Such was the eagerness with which they were thrust from the land that "their kneading-troughs were bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders." They marched forth, driving their flocks and herds before them; their orderly advance contrasting with the unorganised movements of the mixed multitude, formed probably of the lowest orders of the Egyptians, in their rear. With them they bore the bones of Joseph, a connecting link between their past history and their future destiny. They left behind them the great treasure-cities which their labours had erected, and the pleasant land of Goshen, where their too great prosperity had brought upon them such cruel persecution. They were to see no more the majestic temples of gods whose worship has long since passed away from the earth, with their mighty pillars, and their avenues of sphinxes; the sacred Nile, symbol of fertility, with its ancient memories; the pyramids rising aloft with mysterious grandeur; the palaces of kings, and the streets of Egyptian cities. Led by Moses, they wandered through the pleasant alluvial plains. At Succoth, where they built them leafy huts, they left the woodlands behind; at Etham, on the edge of the wilderness, they passed the limits

of vegetation. Then arose the dreary solitudes of the desert, where at rare intervals a clump of palm-trees breaks the monotonous continuity of sand, terminated alone by the far-distant horizon.

For three days they marched towards the land of promise; but, as their appearance there might have brought them into contact with the might of the Philistines, they were directed to turn southward, and thus approached the shores of the Red Sea before "Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, over against Baal-zephon." The Lord had gone before them, "by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light."

Ere long, the heart of Pharaoh became hard once more. He repented that he had given them permission to depart. "They are entangled in the land," he cried in tones of exultation; "the wilderness hath shut them in." He made ready to overtake and slay them. They stood, therefore, on the shores of the sea, wearied by their long journey, and pursued by a large army bent on their destruction,—"all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen, and his army;" they were in a position which seemed to offer no hope of escape. What wonder that they began to question the divine mission of their leader, and to say aloud to him, "Wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt?" Their want of faith was firmly rebuked. "Fear ye not; stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will show to you to-day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more for ever." And then we are told a way of escape was opened for them. The darkness fell, and a mighty east wind, blowing all that night, caused the waters to go back, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. Amidst this terrible convulsion of nature, this wild tumult of the elements, the fugitives passed over, walking along the bed of the sea, with the waters standing as a wall on either side of them. The pillar of cloud hung with murky gloom over the host of the Egyptians, who, in their blind fury, had followed headlong into the passage which the hand of God had riven through the deep. And in the morning watch a horrible fate overwhelmed them. The multitudes were troubled, and resolved to turn back from the pursuit. But their resolution came too late; for Moses, in obedience to divine command, stretched forth his hand over the sea, and, to quote the words of the sacred narrative, "the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them: there remained not so much as one of them."

Thus the fugitives, in whose hearts all hope had been blotted out, were delivered from their relentless persecutors. As they stood on the further bank, they burst into a glad song of thanksgiving, in which they attributed the glory of their deliverance, not to themselves, but to Jehovah. "I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea."

Let us leave them for a while on the shore of the Red Sea, and, looking back into the twilight of ancient times, attempt to answer the question, What was their past?

The nation whose emancipation we have been considering held traditions and beliefs whose continuity could be traced from the origin of all created things. It had been handed down to them from the remotest past that in the beginning, by the creative power of God, order was slowly evolved from chaos, the soil was covered with vegetation, the water was filled with fish, the air with fowls, the earth with animals, culminating in man. That, in consequence of his sin, Adam, the first man, was driven from the garden of Eden; that in the days of Noah, who lived several generations after Adam, all flesh, except his chosen family, were destroyed by a flood; and that from Noah sprang the multitudes that replenished the earth. The division of races was a divine punishment on mankind for the presumption of wishing to build a tower whose top might reach to heaven. Themselves they regarded as descendants of Shem, the first-born of the patriarch Noah: Abraham was the founder of their race.

The Jewish Exodus, the first recorded instance of the weak freeing themselves from the heavy yoke of the strong, has seemed no unfitting incident to select as an introduction to Universal History.*

* This Introduction has been specially supplied by a hand different from that which is accountable for the body of the work.

CUNEIFORM INSCRIPTION.*

CHAPTER I.

THE EARLY MONARCHY OF CHALDÆA.

The Beginning of the Kingdom of Nimrod—Building of the Tower of Babel—Sabæism—General Character of Mesopotamia—The original Babylonians a Cushite Race—Primitive Religion of the Accadian Settlers—Early Record of Chaldæa, according to Berosus—Rise of Babylon as a City—Oannes, the Fish-Man—Construction and Nature of the Birs Nimroud—Explorations of Sir Henry Rawlinson—Present State of the Ruins in Mesopotamia—The Babil as described by Dr. Layard—The Kasr, or Great Palace of Nebuchadnezzar—Chief Features of Babylonian Architecture—Babylon, "the Gate of the God Il"—Description of the City by Herodotus—Accounts given by Ctesias and other Writers—The Cuneiform Inscriptions—Commerce and Manufactures of Babylon.

THE record of nations and of sovereignties begins on the plains of Mesopotamia, and in the sun-burnt realm of Egypt. Of the two great Monarchies of the primal world, it is not very easy to say whether the precedence in point of time lies with Chaldæa (known later on as Babylonia), or with Egypt. Both can claim a very high antiquity; both were civilised and powerful when other States were comparatively barbarous and feeble. But, as the empire established by Nimrod is the first mentioned in the Bible, and is therefore generally regarded as the earliest example of consolidated and regal power, we will direct our attention to that, and to the companion Monarchy of Assyria, before crossing the Isthmus of Suez into Africa.

Following the narrative in Genesis (chapter x.), we find that Nimrod, the son of Cush, who was himself the eldest son of Ham, who was the son of Noah, began to be a mighty one in the earth, and that the beginning of his kingdom was Babel (*i.e.*, Babylon), and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the Land of Shinar—in other words, the country between the Euphrates and the Tigris, on the lower or more southern portions of those streams. Nineveh also is mentioned in this connection, but in a passage of some obscurity, leaving it doubtful whether the city was built by Nimrod in the land of Asshur (Assyria), or by Asshur, the son of Shem, in a territory of his own, which, further on, became part of the Assyrian Empire, and even furnished its capital.

The year in which the Tower of Babel was erected has been set down as 2247 B.C. Belus, the founder of the city of Babylon, is said by some critics to have been the Nimrod of the Bible, and the great temple called after him is thought—though apparently on insufficient grounds—to have been the original tower in the plains of Shinar. If the temple was really made out of an earlier building of rude construction, it must, in the course of time, have received many additions. Even in our own century it has been supposed that some remains of this structure are still to be seen in the Birs Nimroud, or Palace of Nimrod—a vast heap of bricks, clay, and broken pottery, surmounted by the ruins of an old tower, situated six miles to the south-west of Hillah. It is doubtful, however, whether this edifice (of which we shall have occasion to speak at greater length further on) was really within the site of ancient Babylon; and perhaps it is wiser in these matters not to attempt a degree of accuracy which the immense lapse of time and the paucity of early records have made impossible.

The religion of those who built the Tower of

* From a slab in the British Museum, representing Sennacherib on his throne before Lachish. The translation runs: "Sennacherib, the mighty king, king of the country of Assyria, sitting on the throne of judgment, before the city of Lachish. I give permission for its slaughter."

Babel is thought to have been Sabæism, and it has sometimes been suggested that one of their objects in erecting so high a structure was that they might with the greater readiness observe and worship the heavenly bodies. Sabæism was undoubtedly among the earliest religions of the world, though, perhaps, not the very oldest of all. It was a species of Nature-worship, and consisted in the adoration of the stars, which were regarded as the abodes of certain angels, intelligences, or gods. Thus, the sun and moon were supposed to be animated by a superior order of divinities; the fixed stars and the planets, by gods of lower powers. But all these were subject to the supreme Deity, whose unity and perfection were invariably asserted by the Sabæans. The system, indeed, appears to have been a very curious combination of Pantheism and Polytheism, degenerating after a time into idolatry, but retaining under the worst conditions a considerable measure of exalted religious feeling. It was among the Chaldæans that this belief originated, and the Chaldæans were from an early date addicted to the study of astronomy, for which the clear and brilliant firmament of Mesopotamia offered peculiar facilities. The habitual observation of those remote and splendid bodies which divide the day from the night by their majestic, harmonious, and unswerving order, may well have suggested the idea of guardian genii, regulating the movements of the spheres, and shedding a mysterious influence on the earth itself. In the first instance, all external acts of worship were directed towards the planets and constellations; then images were formed, to which the names of the celestial orbs were transferred. It is easy to see how in this way the practice of idolatry arose; yet the supremacy of one great creative Spirit, to whom all the minor gods, angels, and genii were tributary, was never forgotten. The Sabæans were obliged to pray three times a day—before sunrise, before noon, and before sunset. It was part of their belief that the souls of the wicked would be punished for nine thousand years, but would then be admitted to mercy. They observed three annual fasts; the first extending over thirty days, the second over nine, and the third over seven. They offered many sacrifices, of which they ate no part, but burned the whole. At certain periods they went on pilgrimage to a place near the city of Haran, in Mesopotamia, where large numbers of them dwelt; and they paid great respect to the Pyramids of Egypt, which they believed to be the sepulchres of Seth, and of his two sons, Enoch and Sabi, whom they reverenced as the first propagators of their religion.* This was at a later period than that with which we are now concerned; but the Sabæans were for many ages an important religious body in the East, and their doctrines had an immense influence over the whole course of Paganism.

The founding of Nimrod's kingdom is supposed by some chronologers to have taken place a little after the confusion of tongues at the Tower of Babel; and the building of Babylon and Nineveh may be referred to about the same year, which, however, it is impossible to fix with accuracy. The date generally accepted is 2245 B.C.; but this is by no means certain. It is unquestionable, however, that at a very early epoch a great monarchy arose in the plains of Mesopotamia, and acquired a predominance over surrounding countries by the energy of its people and the martial prowess of its rulers. The profoundly interesting land to which the Greeks gave the name of Mesopotamia (the country between the rivers) is flanked on the west by the Euphrates, and on the east by the Tigris, the sources of which streams lie within a few miles of one another, on opposite sides of Mount Niphates, in Armenia. Flowing, for the most part, in a south-easterly direction, but with so considerable a divergence from one another that in the centre of their course a breadth of nearly three hundred miles intervenes between them, the two rivers unite near the head of the Persian Gulf, which receives the commingled body of waters, after the Euphrates has run 1,780 miles, and the Tigris 1,146. The territory thus enclosed is so nearly an island that the modern Arabs call it by a name having that signification—Al-Jezireh. In some of the Semitic tongues it is termed Aram-Naharaïm,—"Aram (or Syria) of the Two Rivers;" so that the alluvial nature of the country seems to have been always present to those who were under any necessity of giving it a title. The general character of the land (excepting in the north, where there are mountains) is that of a slightly elevated plain, divided into two parts—Upper and Lower Mesopotamia—by the range of the Sinjar hills, running east and west. The first of these divisions may be taken as nearly corresponding with Assyria Proper; the latter, with Babylonia. But it must be recollected that for a long period Assyria and Babylonia were closely united. The name of Mesopotamia is really applicable to the whole territory between the rivers; but it is generally used by ancient writers so as to exclude Babylonia.

It was, as we have seen, in this immense table-land that the original Babylonian Monarchy was established. The country described in the Bible as the Land of the Chaldæans, or the Land of Shinar,

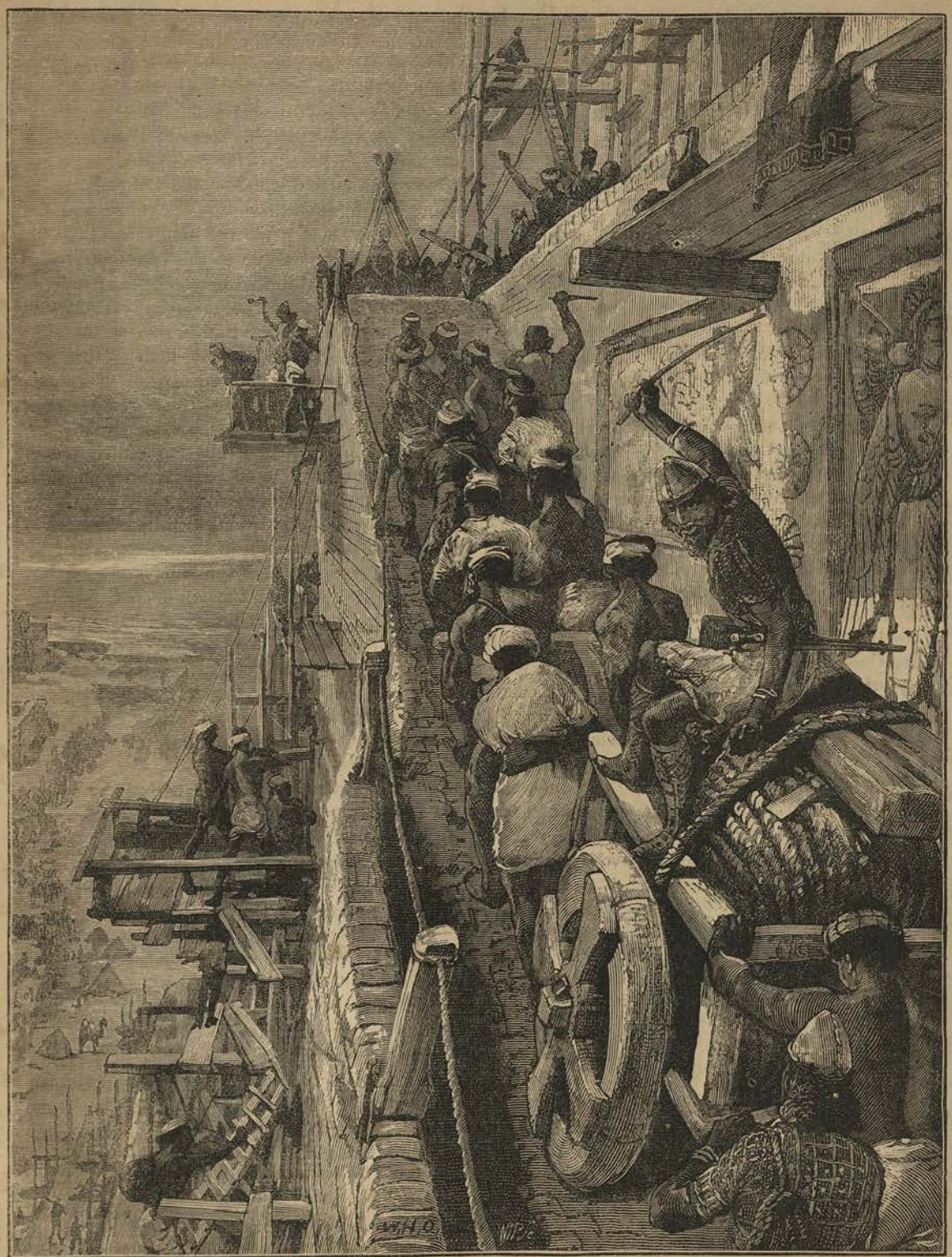
* Sale's Preliminary Discourse to the Koran.

and which was in truth the most southern part of Babylonia, as Babylonia was the most southern part of Mesopotamia, is a vast and melancholy flat, unbroken except by the works of man, and extending for a distance of four hundred miles along the course of the rivers, with an average width of about a hundred miles. The present aspect of these plains is that of extreme barrenness, rendered more forlorn by the shattered and moulder-ing relics of an ancient civilisation which at one time conferred prosperity and splendour on the realm. In remote centuries, a complicated system from the main arteries, are entirely obliterated; un wieldy heaps of rubbish encumber the ground, testifying by their almost mountainous bulk to the hugeness of the cities where civilisation took its rise, and the luxury of the East was born; an op-pressive silence has succeeded to the murmur of industrial arts, the clangour of arms, the rush of chariots of war, and the chanting of barbarian hymns; stagnant marshes, exhaling the subtle poison of decay, alternate with tracts of drought; and even the wandering Arab has abandoned a country no longer capable of supporting human life.

VIEW IN THE SYRIAN DESERT.

of canals and water-courses existed in all parts of Chaldæa, and the earth was fertilised to a degree not surpassed by that of the Nile itself. Abundant harvests glowed and rustled where now there is nothing but arid wastes; frequent groves of palm-trees tufted the open fields with knots of shadow and with crowns of green; em-bowered gardens spread coolness and refreshment round the pavilions of the rich; and, in the autumn, the grapes were purple to the gatherers in many a vineyard of the teeming soil. At the present day, all is changed. The dreary wastes, unquickened by refreshing streams, uncheered by vegetation, are varied only by long lines of mounds, marking the course of those magnificent canals which, in ages long gone by, were sources of life and wealth to a numerous population. Every drop of moisture has long vanished from these ruined channels; the smaller rivulets, which branched off like veins

The original Babylonians are stated in the Book of Genesis to have been Hamites, of the tribe of Cush, to which Nimrod belonged; the Assyrians are generally believed to have been of Semitic race. The distinction between these families (the Hamitic and Semitic) was probably slight; but the evidence of language shows that the two were not identical. Cuneiform (arrow-headed) inscriptions, discovered in modern times in Lower Mesopotamia, prove that the first Babylonian tongue was akin to that of the Ethiopian Gallas. But the country afterwards underwent a Semitic subjugation, and the language assumed a different character in consequence. Babel, or Babylon, was a city in that part of the subsequent Babylonian Monarchy which, as we have said, was called Chaldæa, or the Land of Shinar. But the term Chaldæan was in later ages applied, irrespective of race, to a priestly caste, the members of which were also astrologers



THE BUILDING OF BABEL.

and magicians—the depositaries of an occult and mysterious learning which they enshrined in the ancient Hamitic language, by that time superseded, so far as general use was concerned, by the Assyrian speech, or at least by something analogous. Thus, the prophet Daniel was appointed head of the Magi during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, on account of his skill in the interpretation of dreams.* Accordingly, the Chaldæans of the later books of the Old Testament were the astrologers of the Babylonian court; but in the earlier books they are the Hamitic or Cushite race of Lower Mesopotamia, who are generally associated with the Tower of Babel, and who, as related in the Bible, established a monarchy of some importance even in the remote era of patriarchal rule.

The primitive records of Babylonia are lost in dense obscurity. A long array of names, and a few fragmentary details, have been derived from an examination of the cuneiform inscriptions found in Babylonian and Assyrian ruins; but these particulars, however interesting from an antiquarian, ethnographical, or philological point of view, can scarcely be regarded as history. "It is quite uncertain," wrote the late Mr. George Smith, of the British Museum, "how far back the records of Babylonia reach, and the lists of kings are too imperfect to construct any satisfactory scheme from them; but it is certain that they reach up to the twenty-fourth century B.C., and some scholars are of opinion that they stretch nearly two thousand years before that time. Certainly, a civilisation, literature, and government, like that which we find in Babylonia two thousand years before the Christian era, could not have arisen in a day." † A native historian, named Berosus, who was a priest of Belus, at Babylon, under the Greek rule of Antiochus II., in the third century B.C., gives a list of eight dynasties of Babylonian kings, of which the first is purely mythical, having relation to a race of gods and demi-gods, several of whom reigned before the flood.‡ The second dynasty, according to this account, consisted of eight Median kings; and there is ground for supposing that, in very distant times, a Scythian tribe, belonging to the great Turanian family, entered Chaldæa from lands bordering on Media, and settled there, together with some of Aryan stock. The evidence of these facts is derived from inscriptions on ancient monuments, which have only in recent times been deciphered, and from the teachings of comparative philology. The settlers from the north-east were called Accadians, and from them the city of Accad took its name. They formed a most important element in the population, and transmitted to the later Chaldæans and Babylonians the leading principles of their religion, polity, and art. That the establishment of civilisation in the Euphrates valley was due to the Turanian race, is now very generally believed by competent inquirers. "It is the opinion of the majority of Assyrian scholars," says Mr. George Smith, one of the most distinguished members of that body, "that the literature, mythology, and science of Babylonia and Assyria were not the work of a Semitic race, but of a totally different people, speaking a language quite distinct from that of all the Semitic tribes. There is, however, a more remarkable point than this: it is supposed that, at a very early period, the Accad or Turanian population, with its high cultivation and remarkable civilisation, was conquered by the Semitic race, and that the conquerors imposed only their language on the conquered, adopting from the subjugated people its mythology, laws, literature, and almost every art of civilisation." § The inscriptions, however, are not known to contain any allusion to such a conquest, and nothing has been discovered showing how the change of language was effected, or when the Semitic invasion took place.

Another speculation is that the early Babylonians came from Ethiopia. In support of this view, Sir Henry Rawlinson instances the similarity of the Babylonian mode of writing to the Egyptian, and the indication, in the traditions of Babylonia and Assyria, of a connection in very early times between Ethiopia, Southern Arabia, and the cities on the Lower Euphrates. Following the same conjectural lines, a living authority, of great erudition, has supposed that the Hamite races, very shortly after their arrival in Africa, began moving to the east, to the north, and to the west; that the Cushites established settlements along the southern Arabian coast, on the Arabian shore of the Persian Gulf, and in Babylonia, besides extending eastward to the Indus, and probably also as far north as Nineveh; and that the Mizraites (Egyptians) spread along the south and east shores of the Mediterranean, over part of the north shore, and in the great islands. These two divisions of the same race may, according to the same authority, be

* Daniel, ii. 48.

† Assyrian Discoveries, by George Smith. 1875.

‡ Berosus was the author of a Greek "History of Chaldæa," compiled from archives in the Temple of Belus. We have, at the present day, only some fragments of this work, preserved in the writings of Josephus and other authors.

§ Assyrian Discoveries. 1875.

always traced where the architectural remains are very massive, where the language is partly Turanian and partly Semitic, and where the native religion is partly cosmic, or high Nature-worship, and partly fetichism, or low Nature-worship.* It must be borne in mind, however, that all these speculations are incapable of exact proof.

The religion of Chaldæa and of Assyria was derived from the primitive Accadian race, which in very remote times peopled both countries. Although a number of gods were recognised in this faith, they appear to have been subordinate to one over-ruling Spirit; and, in its higher and later manifestations, the Accadian theology was not unlike that of the Hebrews. "O Lord!" says one of the Accadian hymns, still existing in tablets of *terra-cotta*, "my transgressions are many: great are my sins. The Lord, in the anger of his heart, has confounded me." In another we read,—"May God, my creator, take mine hands! Guide thou the breath of my mouth! Guide thou mine hands, O Lord of Light!" But the religious system of the Accadians included a vast number of spirits, good and bad. Every object had its attendant dæmon, and the power of controlling these genii belonged to the priests and magicians. This was the earliest form of the Accadian religion, and something similar to it exists among the Siberian and Samoyede tribes of the present day, by whom it is called Shamanism, which may be defined as the religion of sorcery. When the Accadian race had become more intellectually developed, a species of Nature-worship supervened, and at the head of the Pantheon stood the deities of the sky, the earth, and the underworld. Gods and goddesses innumerable filled the popular mind with images of mysterious power, and the sun, the moon, and the stars, received divine honours as rulers over the destinies of men. In this way, probably, arose the Sabæism of the Chaldæans. The Jews, who were of Chaldæan origin, shared many of the traditions and beliefs of the Accadians. In an Assyrian bas-relief, the mediæval devil, with horns, claws, tail, and wings, may yet be seen. Two poems illustrative of the Accadian mythology still exist in the engraved tablets found among the Mesopotamian ruins; and they show how strong was the feeling of human dependence on the heavenly bodies and the spirits of the abyss.†

Berosus speaks of the first Babylonian dynasty (including the antediluvian monarchs) as of Chaldæan race, and he affirms that the Chaldæans again succeeded to power after the eight Median kings. His statements, in the opinion of Professor Rawlinson,‡ appear to fix the commencement of this third dynasty at the year 2234, which would be thirteen years after the destruction of the Tower of Babel, the confusion of tongues, and the dispersion of the human family over the face of the earth. The narrative of Berosus is doubtless not without some degree of historical truth; but as regards the date of the third dynasty it is difficult to reconcile his statements with the Biblical account, which makes no mention of any previous dynasty, or any distinction of races, but states that until the building of the tower "the whole earth was of one language and of one speech" (Gen., xi. 1). Moreover, it would appear from that account that the dispersion took place in some age not very far removed from the almost total destruction of mankind by the Deluge; so that, from this point of view, there would be but little time for the development of races and the succession of dynasties. According to the received chronology, the intervening period was about a century.

The Babylonian or Chaldæan Monarchy, said to have been established by Nimrod, was not large in the modern sense of the word; yet it comprised a considerable amount of territory between the rivers, and would seem, from what appears on some of the ancient monuments, to have been divided into Upper and Lower Chaldæa. The extent of the two provinces, taken together, was from Hit, on the Euphrates, to the Persian Gulf; and each had a tetrapolis, or constellation of four principal cities. It is a singular fact that, in the Babylonian remains unearthed in our days, there is no mention of Nimrod; but it has been thought that this Scriptural being is identical with the god Bel, and thus with Belus, the founder of the city of Babylon, according to the Greeks. With regard to the origin of that city, there appears to be a certain ambiguity in the Biblical account. In the tenth chapter of Genesis, Babel or Babylon is mentioned as one of four cities in the kingdom which Nimrod began. The following chapter, which apparently refers to subsequent events, states that a people who "journeyed from the east," and with whom Nimrod is not associated, built, together with the tower in the plains of Shinar, a city which was subsequently called Babel (in Greek, Babylon), "because the Lord did there confound the language of all

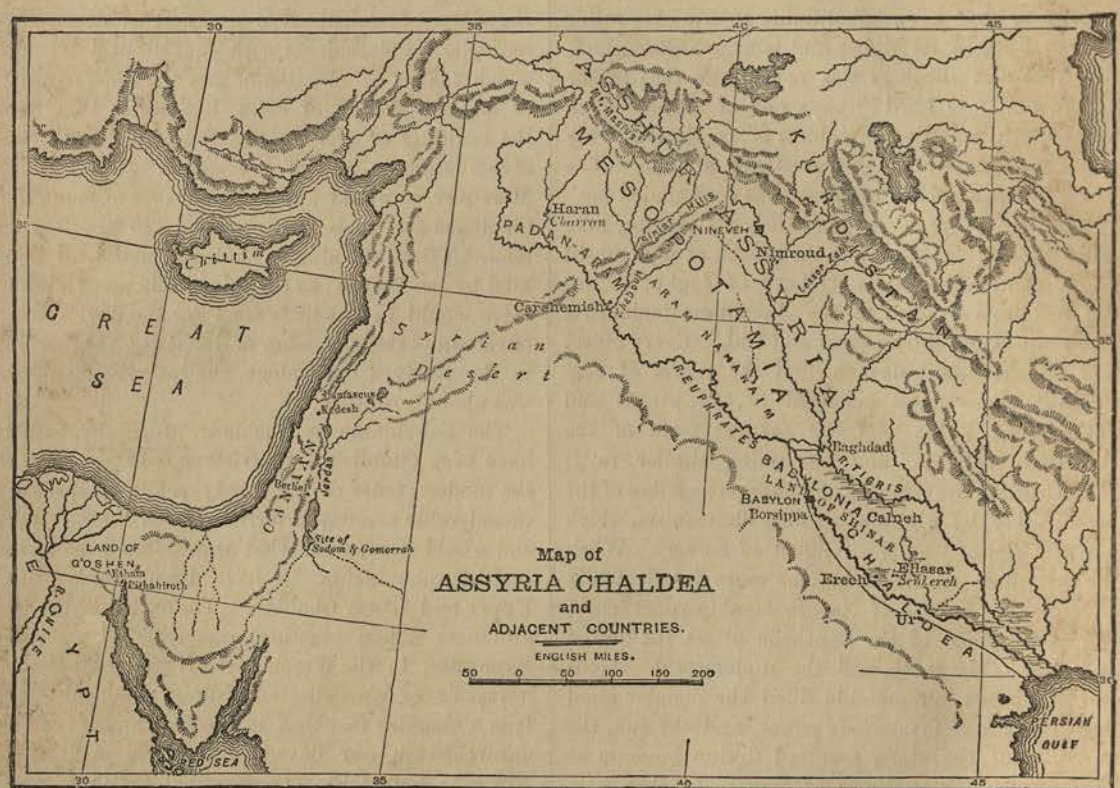
* Mr. Reginald Stuart Poole, in Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, Art. "Cush."

† Encyclopædia Britannica, 9th Edition (1875). Art. on "Babylonia and Assyria," by the Rev. A. H. Sayce.

‡ The Five Great Monarchies of the Ancient Eastern World. 1867.

the earth." It is also said that after this catastrophe the people "left off to build the city." Nothing more about Babylon is recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures until a much later period; but, whatever the circumstances of its rise, or whatever temporary check it may have sustained, it must have rapidly increased in power, for at an early date it was undoubtedly a large and prosperous city. It was not, however, the original capital of Chaldæa, nor was it the most ancient of the four cities in that kingdom, although it is the first mentioned in Genesis. Erech, Ur, and Ellasar—all in the southern tetrapolis, which was completed by Calneh—appear to have been older ;* and it may therefore be assumed that the greatness of the kingdom began in the south, rather than in the north. The metropolitan cities at that time were Ur and Erech, the first of which has been identified with the modern Mugheir, and the latter with Warka. The rise of the Chaldæan power (though probably not of the race) was, in the opinion of Professor Rawlinson, in the regions close to the Persian Gulf, whence the realm spread northwards up the course of the rivers, until, in the lapse of time, the seat of government was fixed at Babylon. The earliest capital was Ur, or, according to some authorities, Erech.

This view derives confirmation from an ancient myth recorded by Berosus, to the effect that civilisation was introduced into Chaldæa by a mysterious being named Oannes, who to the upper part of a man united the lower parts of a fish, and who came up out of the Indian Sea in some very distant age, many thousands of years before the Deluge. From time to time, in subsequent eras, but still before the date of the great flood, six more fish-men issued out of the sea, and taught the principles of the old Chaldæan faith, ultimately embodied in the Seven Sacred Books. Myths, however wild in themselves, have generally some degree of truth, and are often valuable as evidence of the migration of races. Regarded in this light, the fable of Oannes seems to indicate the southern origin of the Babylonian Monarchy; and it is also observable that the classical writers gave the name of Chaldæa simply to those parts of Mesopotamia which border on the lower course of the Euphrates,



MAP OF CHALDÆA.

* Professor Rawlinson, in Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, Art. "Babel, Babylon."

and that the cities near the Persian Gulf are manifestly older than Babylon. On the other hand, it is argued by some writers that the original seats of the Chaldæan race were in the southern highlands of Armenia; and it is thence inferred that the movement must have been from north to south. The two views, however, are not necessarily inconsistent. The race may in the first instance have moved southward, and, in later ages, when more civilised, have again turned towards the north. If we suppose a greater lapse of time than the popular chronology allows—and of this greater lapse there cannot now be any reasonable doubt — numerous difficulties vanish, which in former days perplexed and harassed the inquirer.

The art of these early Chaldæans, and to some extent their daily life, may be judged from the ruins of ancient cities which modern enterprise has redeemed from the soil. The site of Borsippa, one of the principal cities of the northern tetrapolis, is particularly rich in remains. Borsippa is not mentioned in the Bible; yet it was here that the chief of the great tower-temples of Babylonia threw its massive shadow over the plains. The ruins still exist in the vast heap entitled the Birs Nimroud, which affords an approximate idea of what these religious edifices were like. Similar relics are to be seen at Mugheir and Warka—the ancient Ur and Erech, as it is now believed—but on a smaller scale, being of earlier date, and therefore less highly developed. The buildings were apparently designed for astronomical as well as religious purposes: indeed, the reader is already aware that the religion of the primitive Chaldæans was closely associated with the observation of the heavenly bodies. The ground-plan of each tower was an exact parallelogram, of which the angles looked to the four cardinal points; and above this the building rose in a succession of massive squares, continually diminishing until the last was reached. In the Birs Nimroud, the number of stories was seven, which corresponded with the sun, the moon, and the five planets. The outer walls were coloured differently in each story, in harmony, it would appear, with some abtruse or mystical conception of astronomical fitness. Thus, the basement was black; the second stage, orange; the third, red; the fourth, it is believed, golden; the fifth, yellow; the sixth, blue; the seventh, probably silver. The fourth and seventh are doubtful, as the colours in those two instances cannot be clearly made out in the ruins; but the conjectures seem plausible from what is known of ancient symbolism. By the dark-coloured basement, the Babylonians signified the heavy and morose spirit of Saturn, or the earth. The second stage was consecrated to the planet Jupiter; the third to Mars, whose colour has always been red; the fourth to the Sun, which would naturally be typified by the radiance of gold; the fifth to Venus; the sixth to Mercury; and the seventh to the Moon, for which a silvery face was obviously appropriate. The mythology of the later Greeks had already commenced in the planetary system of the Chaldæans, with its accompanying hierarchy of guardian geniuses, or minor gods.*

The original height of the Birs Nimroud was at least a hundred and fifty-three feet, if not higher, and it was the loftiest structure of the kind known to exist in that part of the world. The last story upheld the shrine or tabernacle, which thus formed a kind of eighth tier in addition to the others. The upper portions had also sleeping chambers for the priests in summer, placed there for the advantage of the cooler air, which at that altitude was less troubled by mosquitos from the sultry plain beneath. All the early temples of the Chaldæans took this form of a square tower, lessening in breadth with its successive stages; and in the case of the Birs Nimroud it is possible to make out the exact character and dimensions of the building. It is in fact (as shown by recent examinations) a sort of oblique pyramid, reared upon a platform of sun-dried bricks, not more than three feet in height. These successive stages, of which the first three are loftier than the last four, are so constructed that the centres are not exactly over one another, but are inclined towards the south-west, or hinder portion, so that the front of the tower at the summit is more than two hundred feet from the front line of the basement, while the back is less than a hundred feet from the rear line. This, of course, gives a steeper ascent in the one direction than in the other; but the sides recede equally. The grand entrance was at the north-eastern end, and was fronted by a vestibule—a separate building, the ruins of which are now mingled with those of the temple itself, thus forming an immense mound, which rises dark and desolate and lonely from the midst of arid flats, where the shadow of a dim and melancholy antiquity rests on all things like a spell. The tower itself is constructed of burnt bricks; for the Babylonians, living in a wide alluvial plain, had great difficulty in obtaining stone. The bricks were cemented with a substance which looks like lime-mortar, and the workmanship betokens great skill and mastery. It would seem, from the fragments of stone, marble,

* The Latin names of the planets are used here, as being more familiar to the general reader.

and basalt discovered among the heaps of rubbish, that the building now called the Birs Nimroud was once encrusted with more costly material than that which sufficed for the body of the edifice. This outer adornment, together with the upper portion of the tower, has in the lapse of ages fallen away

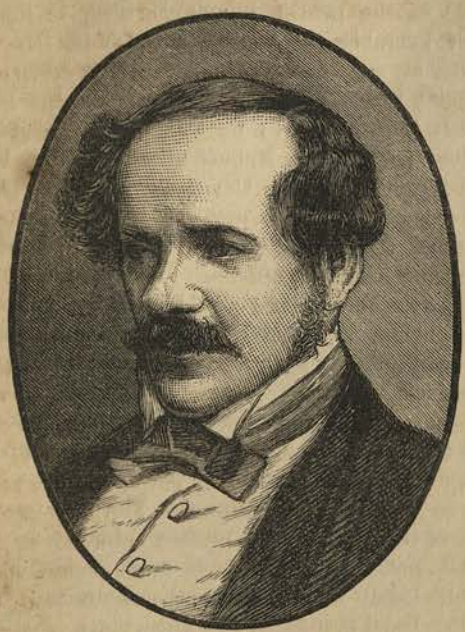
THE BIRS NIMROUD.

from the rest, and formed, by the slow process of decay, a huge and shapeless mass of earth, which has preserved a large part of the ruin in something like its original integrity.

By many travellers, this remarkable structure has been identified with the Tower of Babel; by some, with the Temple of Belus, described by Herodotus and other ancient writers. It has now, however, been made sufficiently clear that it was neither. The researches of Sir Henry Rawlinson have shown that the Birs Nimroud was the great Temple of Nebo, situated, not at Babylon itself, but at Borsippa, on the right or western bank of the Euphrates, a little to the south of the great city.* When conducting his explorations on this spot, between the years 1849 and 1855, Colonel Rawlinson discovered the angle of the basement wall, and, on excavating, found in a recess a commemorative cylinder covered with inscriptions, which seems to have been intended to answer the same purpose as the bottle containing coins and newspapers which it is customary to deposit under the corner-stone of modern buildings. A similar hollow, with a duplicate cylinder, was discovered in the opposite angle. The inscription was in cuneiform or wedge-shaped characters, bearing some resemblance to the barbed head of an arrow; and, on being translated, it was found to state that this building, the Temple of the Seven Spheres—originally constructed 504 years before the time at which the cylinder was inscribed—had become ruinous, owing to neglect of drainage, and that the god Merodach had put it into the heart of the Great King, Nebuchadnezzar, to rebuild the whole edifice, with the exception of the platform, which had not been injured. The era of Nebuchadnezzar was in the sixth century B.C.; so that the date of the first temple must have been about 1100 B.C. Even this original structure, therefore, does not belong to the earliest ages of Babylonian history; yet it is probable that the Birs Nimroud may be accepted as a type of the Chaldæan tower-temples, even in the primitive ages of Sabæism, excepting that the older buildings were on a smaller scale, and less magnificently adorned. Thus, the temples at Mugheir and Warka, which are believed to date

* General Sir Henry Rawlinson must not be confounded with his brother, the Camden Professor of Ancient History in the University of Oxford, to whom we are indebted for a learned work on "The Five Great Monarchies of the Ancient Eastern World," and "A Manual of Ancient History." Sir Henry is one of the chief interpreters of the cuneiform inscriptions.

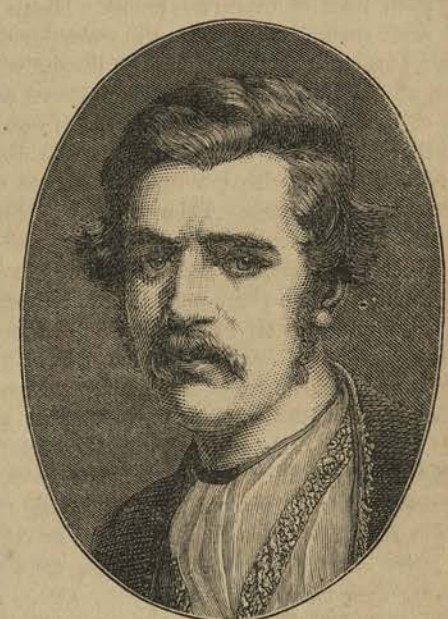
back as far as the year 2230 B.C., or perhaps earlier, are in many respects similar to the great fane at Borsippa; but they appear never to have had more than



SIR HENRY RAWLINSON.

three or four stages. The Warka temple is only a hundred feet high; that of Mugheir, not more than fifty feet. The material of the former consists entirely of sun-dried bricks, very rough and irregular in their form and shape; mud is used for mortar; and reeds are largely mixed with this rude cement, to give it a more binding character. Somewhat less primitive in style is the edifice at Mugheir, where the walls of sun-dried bricks are faced with others which have evidently been through the kiln; but even these burnt bricks are small in size, and of inferior quality. The cement here employed is bitumen, with which the soil of Chaldæa abounds, and which is probably the "slime" alluded to in Genesis as being used by the builders of the Tower of Babel instead of mortar. No reeds are found between the courses of the brickwork at Mugheir; and altogether the structure, though not very elaborate, shows a higher development of art than the temple at Warka.

According to the traveller Rich, who visited Mesopotamia in the early part of the present century, the circumference of the object now designated the Birs Nimroud is 762 yards, with a total perpendicular height of 235 feet. The chief mass is rent by a deep furrow, and on the western side rises in a conical figure to an elevation of 198 feet, surmounted by a pile of brick, thirty-seven feet high by twenty-eight in breadth, diminishing in thickness towards the top, which is cloven by a great fissure, extending through a third of its height.* Many ravines and water-courses traverse the dreary and irregular heaps of ruined brickwork, shattered stone, and broken pottery; and the component parts are bound together by a thin covering of hungry soil, formed by driftings from the Syrian desert. In this soil no herb or grass will take root, so that the mound is for ever sterile, for ever yellow and livid on the lifeless plain that stretches round. The summit of the hill (for such it may now be called) is covered with immense fragments of brickwork, confusedly tumbled together, and converted into huge vitrified masses by the action of fire, probably of lightning. This fact may have given rise to the former belief that the Birs Nimroud is really what remains of the Tower of Babel, which, according to an old tradition, was struck by fire from heaven. Sir Robert Ker Porter has even gone to the extent of arguing that the work of the later Babylonian kings covered and concealed the marks of devastation, and that the destruction wrought by time and man has now



SIR A. H. LAYARD.

* The measurements given above are those of Mr. Rich and Mr. Layard; but it is difficult to reconcile them with the statements of Sir Henry Rawlinson, that the original height of the tower-temple was not more than about 156 feet, including the low platform on which it stood, and that the edifice rose from the level plain.

reduced the original edifice to very nearly the same condition in which it appeared after the confusion of tongues. But, as we have seen, the Birs Nimroud is not the Tower of Babel; nor does the Mosaic narrative make any mention of that building having been overthrown by celestial vengeance.

The Birs Nimroud is far from being the only tumulus, consisting of fragments of ancient buildings, which rises above the solitary plain of the two rivers. The gigantic bulk of Babylon has in other places left relics of itself — the graves, or rather bones, of an extinct monster, once endued with awful strength and terrible splendour, now a primeval shadow, a mystery, and a dream. Five miles above Hillah, on the eastern bank of the Euphrates, the traveller observes a series of artificial mounds of enormous size, which unquestionably contain ruins of great age and signal interest, and some of which are crowned with walls that still resist the effects of time. Between Baghdad, to the north, and Hillah, to the south, vast lines of earthen ramparts intersect the gloomy flat through which the Euphrates curves towards the distant sea between lines of evergreen palms. Heaps of drifted earth encumber the way; the embankments of canals, long since exhausted of their life-diffusing streams, stretch in all directions with a dismal continuity of barrenness, excepting near the village of Mohawill, where water still runs along the deep, wide fosse, feeding with perennial freshness the gardens of a rare oasis. Then, as the explorer penetrates farther south, the gaunt, dry, yellow mounds increase in number, and are scattered in disorderly ranks over the plain, until the eye refuses to count them, and they are lost in the dim distance.* This is the region of mighty Babylon—the city of greatness and wickedness, of size and grandeur, of vaunting and overthrow, of superb traditions and evil memory, of dark idolatries and consuming judgment. The wandering Arab shuns these caves and crannies of shattered masonry, declaring that they are haunted; even the European traveller, who comes in the spirit of research, feels the touch of an inexplicable, transmitted awe. Assuredly, if any spot on earth is to be considered as haunted by melancholy genii and the ghosts of vanished life, it is here, where the palaces and temples of a proud antiquity exist only as abiding places for the wild beasts of the desert, and the solitary fowls of heaven.

In this wilderness of ruins, some explorers have fancied they could trace the course of streets, and the divisions between the inhabited quarters of ancient Babylon; but, although the fact may be doubtful, the lines of earthen ramparts enclosing some of the principal mounds, seem to indicate with tolerable exactness a portion of the walls which at one time guarded the city. The chief remains besides the Birs Nimroud are the Babil, which is supposed to be the ancient Temple of Belus, rebuilt by Nebuchadnezzar; the Kasr, which probably marks the site of the great palace erected by the same monarch; the mound of Amrâm, thought by M. Oppert to represent the famous "hanging gardens," but which others regard as the older palace, coeval with the foundations of Babylon, to which Nebuchadnezzar alludes in his inscriptions; a cluster of ruins, conjecturally identified with the lesser palace described by Ctesias, which stood on both sides of the Euphrates; and some of minor importance, which are evidently fragments of public buildings once included within the circuit of the great capital. The most remarkable of these relics of a remote antiquity are the Babil and the Kasr, which must detain us for awhile before we pass on to other matters.

The Babil is situated five miles north of Hillah, and nine hundred and fifty yards from the eastern bank of the river. It is sometimes called Mujelibé, meaning "the overturned;" but the Arabs give it the designation of Babil, and regard it (though erroneously) as a fragment of the tower described in the Book of Genesis. Its shape is oblong, and its height, as well as the measurement of its sides, irregular. Large portions of the original walls remain, and they are found to be constructed of unburnt bricks, mixed with chopped straw or reeds, and cemented with clay-mortar, having between each layer and the next a layer of reeds. All these masses are deeply furrowed by the rains of many centuries, which in some places have worn great chasms into the substance of the mound. Digging into the vast hillocks of decaying masonry, Mr. Layard (now Sir Austen Henry Layard) discovered portions of kiln-burnt bricks, cemented with mortar, and also whole bricks with inscriptions on them. Scattered about are innumerable fragments of pottery, bitumen, pebbles, scoria, glass, shells, and mother-of-pearl. It is in fact a huge pile of rubbish — a dust-heap of antiquity — embedded in which are the cloven and ruined masses of mighty walls, once possessing architectural beauty, and shining with the lavish glory of the East. Contemplated in another light, the Babil, or Mujelibé, may be regarded as a succession of artificial caverns and mysterious ravines, penetrating through dust and darkness into recesses which defy the approach

* Layard's Discoveries in the Ruins of Nineveh and Babylon. 1853.

of the intruder. Near the summit of the northern face is a species of niche, about the height of a man, at the back of which is a passage leading to a small cavity, whence another passage branches off to the right, sloping upwards until it is lost in the rubbish. In this spot, some excavations were made by Mr. Rich, who discovered, amongst other things, a shaft or hollow pier, sixty feet square, exactly corresponding with Strabo's description of the hollow brick piers which supported the hanging gardens, and in each of which, filled with earth, a large tree found root and sustenance. In later years, Mr. Layard continued the explorations of Mr. Rich, and unearthed a number of coffins, containing skeletons more or less entire, which fell to pieces on being exposed to the air. It is an extraordinary fact, considering the length of time these bodies have been buried, that a loathsome and unbearable stench rose from the coffins, which were in the last stage of decay. This foul exhalation was intensified by the bad air of the adjacent passages, now the dens of wild beasts, which have worked their way into them from above. That the original building was the Temple of Belus is generally agreed by modern scholars; but Mr. Layard believes that the part he explored had been used as a cemetery in the time of the Greek occupation, and that some of the walls still existing above the surface belonged to a citadel built after the destruction of the Babylonian Empire.

The most perfect remains are those of the Kasr, or great palace of Nebuchadnezzar. High and massive walls, of considerable extent, are still to be seen, entirely detached from the surrounding heaps of rubbish. So fresh is the appearance of these walls that Mr. Rich at first hesitated to believe they were really Babylonian work. The angles face the cardinal points, as in other Chaldæan ruins—a fact from which an astronomical use may be inferred, as at any rate one of the purposes for which the building was designed. Here and there, pilasters and buttresses give strength to the walls, which are eight feet in thickness, and which in some places have been cleared nearly to the foundations. One of the masses of brickwork has been split into three parts, and overthrown, as if by an earthquake. But this is only a small portion of the original fabric, of which other gigantic remnants are scattered about the neighbouring plain. These enormous ruins have for centuries been used as quarries for the building materials of later races. So vast has been the quantity of bricks thus removed, that a wide and deep ravine has been formed through the crumbling mounds of the Kasr. On nearly every brick are stamped the name and titles of the great Nebuchadnezzar; and these relics of Imperial magnificence, fashioned in the infancy of Rome, may still be recognised in the walls of Baghdad, and even in the miserable cottages of Hillah. Some of the bricks extracted by Mr. Layard from the ruins of the Kasr, and which existed only as fragments, were covered with a thick enamel or glaze, and exhibited figures and ornaments, traced in brilliant blue, red, yellow, white, and black. The colours retained an extraordinary degree of freshness, and recalled the descriptions of ancient authors, who relate that the King's palace had mural decorations, which represented in vivid and glowing hues the forms of men and animals. Mr. Layard here discovered a fragment of limestone, on which were parts of two figures, which he conceived to be those of gods. Fragments of glass, gems, cylinders, small bronze images, earthenware bowls inscribed with ancient characters, and other relics, have been found about the Babylonian ruins; and it is probable that much more would have rewarded the explorer, but for the spoliation which the mounds have undergone during a long succession of ages. The extent of that spoliation may be judged from the fact that Seleucia, Ctesiphon, Al Modain, Baghdad, Kufa, Kerbelah, Hillah, and many other cities and towns, have been built from the remains of Babylon.

Rent and shattered as they are, confused in heaps of rubbish, and covered with a thin, nitrous soil, scattered over them by the hot breath of the desert, the huge remains still breaking the Mesopotamian levels enable us to realise with some distinctness the character of the architecture which was familiar to Nebuchadnezzar. Its most distinguishing feature was that of size. The Babylonian monarchs had the commmand of a vast army of workmen, over whom they could exercise despotic power. Thus they could afford to expend any amount of labour that might be necessary to the production of massive and towering edifices, such as should image forth in visible proportions the might and majesty of the Empire itself. There appears, moreover, to have been something in the Chaldæan genius which delighted in ponderous and gloomy piles, curiously contrasting with the flat and somewhat tame scenery of the river champaign. The effects must have been among the most remarkable in the ancient world; and they were brought about with materials ill-calculated for the embodiment of superb ideas. The Babylonians had no stone or marble, excepting such as they imported from afar; and even of timber their supply was scanty. Consequently, they were obliged to build their palaces and temples of brick, manufactured

from the clay of which a large part of their land consisted. Yet it is evident from what remains of these structures that they had a character of grandeur which has never been surpassed. Like sculptured mountains rising from the cultivated plain, now barren and deserted, they must have struck the mind with an awful sense of power and predominance. Without, all was strength, severity, and shadow-casting bulk; but within, the walls and columns, the friezes and roofs, were aglow with azure and vermilion, and aflame with gold, and the faces of portentous gods looked forth on the monarch and the slave, the reveller at the feast, and the magian on the footsteps of the throne.

It is a remarkable fact that the name of Babylon in the original Chaldæan tongue had no reference to the confounding of languages. The compound word "Bab-il" means "the gate of the god Il," or perhaps simply "the gate of God."* A religious character—for we must not refuse the name of religion to any sincere belief, however monstrous it may appear to us—belonged to the city from the earliest periods; and it was still a stronghold of idolatry when destruction fell on it. A temple was probably the first building raised on the spot, and justice was doubtless administered in the gate of the edifice, after the custom of primitive times. A city would in this way soon grow up about the fane; and thus the designation of the gate extended to the cluster of dwellings which, small at first, came in time to be a metropolis of stupendous size.* The Greeks of the time of Alexander the Great, who derived their information from the Babylonians themselves, said that the city was originally built at a period corresponding to the year 2230 B.C.; but all such dates are open to question. Diodorus Siculus, on the authority of Ctesias, attributes the foundation of Babylon to Semiramis; but, although she probably added to it, her claim to be considered the foundress is doubtful.

Babylon was not much beyond the height of its grandeur and power when Herodotus, in the fifth century B.C., wrote his celebrated description of the place. According to him, the city was in shape quadrangular, showing a front on every side of one hundred and twenty stadia, which gives a total frontage of four hundred and eighty stadia, equivalent to about fifty-six miles. It was adorned in a manner which the Father of History describes as surpassing that of any city with which the world was then acquainted. A deep, wide moat, full of water, ran entirely round it; then came a wall, fifty royal cubits (nearly eighty-five feet) in breadth, and in height two hundred cubits (about three hundred and thirty-seven feet). The earth or clay dug out in making the fosse had furnished the material for the bricks of which the wall was constructed, and hot asphalt had been used for cement. The Greek writer's account of the way in which these walls were built is minute and instructive. "Laying wattled reeds between the thirty bottom courses of bricks," says Herodotus, "they first built up the sides of the moat, and afterwards the wall itself in the same manner; and on the top of the wall, at the edges, they built dwellings of one story, fronting each other, and they left a space between these dwellings sufficient for turning a chariot with four horses." A hundred gates of brass, with posts and lintels of the same metal, broke the line of these massive ramparts, which, beginning on one side of the Euphrates, ended on the other, for the city stood on both banks of the stream. The houses were either three or four stories high. The streets appear to have been straight, and at right angles with each other; and all those which led down to the river-bank terminated in a little gate, also made of brass, formed in the wall which followed the course of the Euphrates on each shore. Besides the great wall, which constituted the outer defence, there was an inner wall, enclosing the immense multitude of edifices, not much inferior to the other in strength, but narrower. In the middle of each division of the city, fortified buildings were erected. The royal palace, standing in a spacious courtyard shut in with brazen gates, rose in one quarter of the metropolis; in the other was the Temple of Belus (Zeus Belus, he is called by Herodotus), now identified with the ruin called the Babil. This building, which was in existence when the great historiographer wrote, and which therefore he himself beheld, is described as a square structure, of equal measurement on every side. In the same precinct of the city was a solid tower, from which rose another, and from that another, and so on to the number of eight. The ascent was outside, running spirally round all the towers. About the middle of the ascent a landing-place was provided, with seats to rest on, for the convenience of those who went up and down. The highest tower consisted of a spacious temple, magnificently furnished; and here the god was said to visit nightly. Another temple is also described by Herodotus: it contained a golden statue of Zeus (we should doubtless understand Belus), with a table and a throne of gold. On a golden altar outside, lambs were frequently offered in sacrifice; and on another altar, of larger size, but less costly substance, the Chaldæans consumed every year, when they celebrated the

* Professor Rawlinson, in Smith's Dictionary of the Bible.

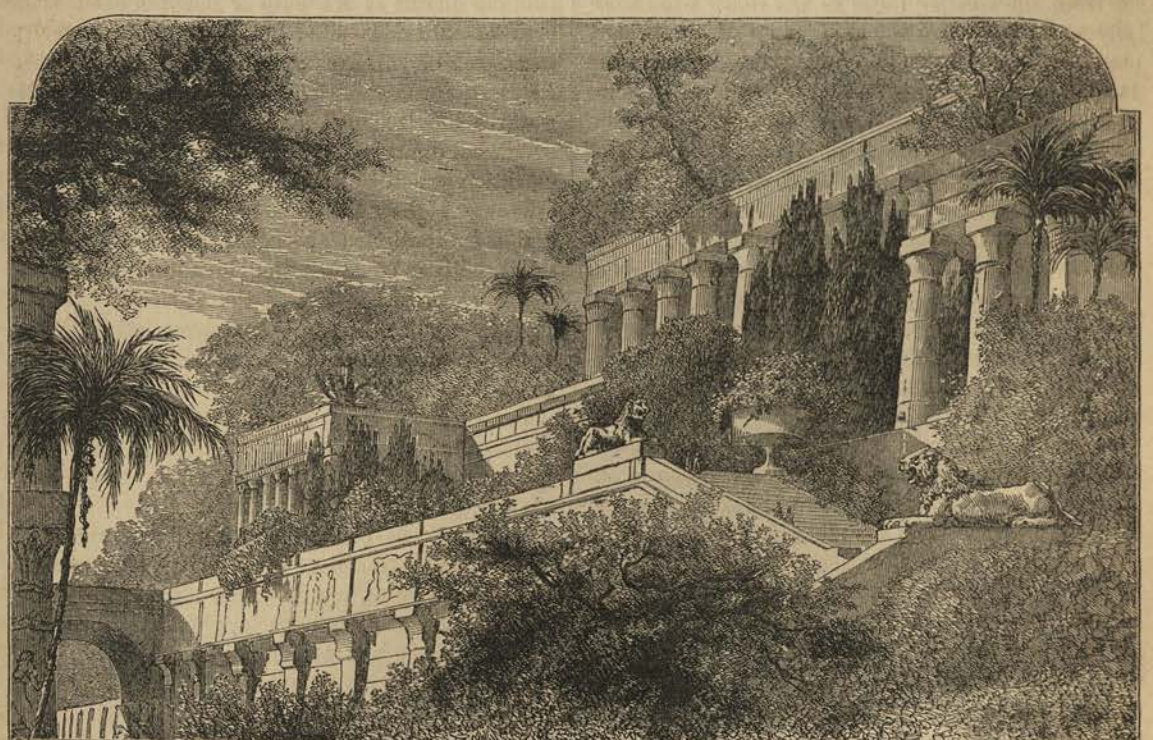
festival of the god, a thousand talents of frankincense.* Until the time of Nitocris, the city was divided into two distinct parts by the course of the Euphrates; but that enterprising queen built a bridge over the river, at an immense expenditure of labour. The piers were formed of large hewn stones, bound together with plates of lead and iron; and while they were being erected, the water was turned into a great excavation, leaving the channel dry. At the same time, the banks of the river were lined with burnt bricks, and the descents that led from the smaller gates to the shore were similarly protected. On the stone piers of the bridge, planks of timber were laid during the day, that the Babylonians might pass to and fro; but these were removed during the night, for the strange reason that, if they were allowed to remain, the people of one quarter might cross over to the other under cover of darkness, and commit robberies. When the bridge was finished, the waters of the Euphrates were suffered to flow back into their ancient bed. Such is the account given by Herodotus of this great capital.

The description furnished by Ctesias, and preserved in the writings of Diodorus Siculus, is different in some of its details. Ctesias lived about the close of the fifth century, and Diodorus a little before the time of Christ. According to the former, the circuit of Babylon was somewhat under forty-two miles—that is, about fourteen miles less than the estimate of Herodotus. At each end of the bridge was a magnificent palace. The one in the eastern city, which was the grander of the two, was defended by three walls: the first, seven miles round; the second, four miles and a half; the third, two miles and a quarter. The height of the second or middle wall was three hundred feet, and its towers attained an altitude of four hundred and twenty feet, while that of the innermost circuit was even greater. The walls of the second and third enclosure are described as built of coloured bricks, and ornamented with hunting scenes, including male and female figures. Similar paintings appeared in the inferior palace of the western city; and the two edifices were joined, not only by the bridge, but by a tunnel under the river. Of the celebrated hanging gardens, Ctesias gives an elaborate but not very clear account. They seem to have formed a square, four hundred feet each way, based on enormous arches, and rising in a succession of terraces, of which the highest was crowned with lofty trees. Berosus, quoted by Josephus, says that Nebuchadnezzar gave to these pensile paradises the exact appearance of a mountainous country, and that he did this to please his queen, who was a native of Media, and therefore accustomed to the prospect of rugged hills and woods. Later writers (still belonging to the classical ages, however) give other details and measurements with respect to Babylon generally, not in accordance with the relations of Herodotus or Ctesias; and the common belief of modern authors is that the earliest accounts were exaggerated, though perhaps unintentionally. Nevertheless, there can be no question that the circuit of the walls of Babylon enclosed an area of *enormous size*; but it would seem that a large part of this area consisted of parks, gardens, fields, and orchards. The alleged height of the walls —three hundred feet and upwards—is, however, somewhat difficult of belief. If they truly reached the elevation stated by Herodotus, they must have been almost as high as the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral; and this, continued through a course of fifty-six miles, with a corresponding breadth, presents an image of vastness such as the modern mind can scarcely realize. These walls were strengthened with two hundred and fifty towers; and the river, as it flowed through the city, was flanked with quays on both sides, some remains of which are still to be seen. But it is believed that the Euphrates has frequently changed its course since the era of the Babylonian power.

The later developments of our knowledge with respect to Babylon have been derived from explorations of the ruins, and from the cuneiform inscriptions which modern scholars (such as General Rawlinson and the Rev. Dr. Hincks) have, with immense difficulty, succeeded in interpreting. These wedge-shaped characters exhibit the art of writing in its rude beginnings. The first attempt to express ideas and facts was naturally by means of pictorial signs, and these signs afterwards came to be used for the indication of sounds similar to those of the names of objects more immediately and directly represented; as, for instance, supposing the language to be English, a sketch of the human eye might be made to do duty for the first person singular. In process of time, the pictorial symbols were modified into certain arbitrary marks, which were understood as the equivalents of particular things. The peculiar form adopted, which has been likened to a wedge or arrow-head, appears to have arisen from the pressure of the lower part of the graving-tool on the soft material of the bricks, before the process of burning. It is remarkable that this simple character should have been capable of so many variations; but, by making slight differences in the shape, and giving the wedges a

* Herodotus, I. 178—183.

multiplicity of inclinations, several distinct types were produced, and a positive system of writing took the place of mere symbolism. Investigators have discovered two separate alphabets of arrow-head marks; the older of which, called the Babylonian or Assyrian, consists of nearly four hundred characters, in which the wedges are placed horizontally, perpendicularly, and obliquely, and are sometimes so disposed as to cross each other in all directions. The more recent alphabet was used in a more extensive knowledge of Oriental languages than Grotefend possessed, followed in the same path; and a key to the mysterious marks was found in the occasional use of those pictorial symbols out of which the characters had arisen, and which were not entirely abandoned until writing, properly so called, had attained some degree of perfection. It is only in comparatively recent years that the attention of scholars has been directed to the inscriptions found among the ruins of Babylon and



THE HANGING GARDENS OF ANCIENT BABYLON.

Persia; and the whole system, which at one time prevailed over the greater part of Western Asia, ceased shortly after the overthrow of the Persian Empire by Alexander the Great.

Some account of cuneiform inscriptions was given as long ago as the middle of the seventeenth century by Pietro della Valle, who had travelled in the East; and, from time to time in later years, specimens of these writings have been engraved and published in Europe. But their meaning was entirely unknown until, early in the present century, Professor Grotefend, of Hanover, identified the names of Darius, Xerxes, and Hystaspes, together with the words "king" and "son," in some of the Persian inscriptions. Other inquirers, with Nineveh; indeed, it was not until the time of Mr. Rich that those ruins were examined with any closeness. In 1851, the Royal Asiatic Society of London printed a memoir by General Rawlinson, containing his analysis of one of the Babylonian inscriptions; and since then, much more has been effected in the same field, which includes both Babylonia and Assyria. The cuneiform inscriptions in this connection are found sometimes on bricks, and sometimes on tablets. From the brick inscriptions, nothing more is to be derived than the names of the kings who built the edifices of which the bricks formed part. The writings on the tablets are much more valuable. These slabs have been discovered in large numbers: they are really books,

and the whole body of them has been compared to a library. The writing is often very fine, and in many instances the lines are set closely together, so as to crowd a good deal of matter into one slab. Nothing can exceed the durability of the substance, which is *terra-cotta*, or burnt clay. Each tablet, after passing through the furnace, was coated with another layer, on which the inscription was repeated, and the whole was again fired, as if these ancient workers had resolved that, in case the outer envelope should be destroyed, the inner writing should still remain. The size of the slabs varies from two inches by one and a half, or even less, to eight inches by six. In addition to the slabs, General Rawlinson and others have dug up several barrel-shaped masses of *terra-cotta*, and a number of prisms, of six, eight, or ten sides each, sometimes twenty inches long, and occasionally, perhaps, even longer. A hole passes through the length of these prisms, as if it had been intended that the object should be mounted like a roller, and turned round, so as to present different sides in succession to the reader of the inscription. Nothing in the nature of parchment or paper has been discovered in the Babylonian and Assyrian ruins; but some of the bas-reliefs in the British Museum show that writing with ink upon parchment was not unknown to the early nations of the Asiatic world, and it is therefore probable that they possessed a cursive (or rapid) character, as well as the cuneiform.

It is surprising how assiduous were the great monarchs of Chaldæa, Assyria, and Babylonia, to perpetuate the records of their achievements; and it is marvellous that, after an oblivion of many ages, these records should have risen as from the darkness of the grave, and taken their long-awaited place in history. Sir Austen Henry Layard has remarked that "the custom of engraving inscriptions on stone, and on tablets of baked clay—the two methods adopted by the Assyrians for perpetuating their annals—is of the very highest antiquity. The Divine commands were first given to man on stone tablets. Job is made to exclaim, 'Oh, that my words were now written! . . . that they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!' (xix. 23, 24); and Ezekiel, when prophesying on the river Chebar, was directed to 'take a tile, and portray upon it the city of Jerusalem' (iv. 1). There could have been no more durable method of preserving the national records; and inscriptions carved on the walls of palaces and temples, and on the face of lofty rocks, and impressed on cylinders and tablets of baked clay, have handed down to us the only authentic history of ancient Assyria."*

In the days of its prosperity, Babylon was not merely a great military power; it was also an important seat of commerce. The Euphrates and the Tigris were navigable for large vessels from the middle plains of Chaldæa to their outfall in the Persian Gulf; and the Tigris, though removed some distance from the great city, was connected with it by navigable canals. From one direction came the pearls, spices, frankincense, gold, jewels, ivory, precious woods, silks, and cotton, of Hindostan and Arabia; from the other, Babylon received the timber of Armenia, and the grain of Mesopotamian fields. The Phœnicians, the greatest traders of antiquity, were glad to exchange commodities with the Babylonians. As at the present time, merchandise was floated down the Euphrates on inflated skins, or conveyed in reed-boats coated with bitumen, when it was not transported in more substantial vessels. The land-trade was principally carried on by caravans; causeways, protected at short intervals by fortified stations, led across the Syrian desert; and a great military and commercial road ran from Susa to Sardis, with stations and caravanserais at intervals of fifteen miles.† But the Babylonians were not only dealers with other nations for the products of foreign climes; they were manufacturers of rare skill, whose fabrics found a market in all the countries of the civilised world. From their looms came magnificent carpets, with inwoven figures of a strange arabesque pattern, exquisite silks, woollen garments embroidered with beautiful designs, and other costly stuffs; while their engraved gems were celebrated throughout the East. This, however, was when the Babylonian Empire had attained its height of glory. We have yet to trace the steps by which the obscure Chaldæan Monarchy expanded into the vast dominion of later days.

* Nineveh and its Remains. Edition 1867.

† Art. "Babylon" in the English Cyclopædia.

ASSYRIAN ORNAMENT.*

CHAPTER II.

CHALDÆA AND ASSYRIA.

Third Dynasty of Chaldæan Kings—Birth of Abram (Abraham)—Wanderings of the Patriarch and his Family—The Call to Abram—Arrival in the Land of Canaan—Jewish Traditions about Abraham—The Wars of Chedorlaomer, King of Elam—Incidents in the Life of Abraham—Death of the Patriarch—Development of the Jewish Nation—The Fourth and Fifth Chaldæan (or Babylonian) Dynasties—Arts and Sciences of the Chaldæans—Assyria and its Boundaries—The Ruins of Nineveh—Explorations of Mr. Rich, M. Botta, and Mr. Layard—Ancient Accounts of Nineveh—General Character of Assyrian Architecture, Sculpture, &c.—Progress and Development of the Arts in Assyria—Religious Symbolism—Assyrian Cuneiform Inscriptions.

NOTWITHSTANDING the light thrown by the cuneiform inscriptions on some portions of Babylonian history, we still know but little of that early Chaldæan Monarchy which, in the popular belief, had Nimrod for its founder. According to Berosus, the eleven Chaldæan monarchs who succeeded to the eight Medes, or Magians, reigned during a period which has been supposed to extend from 2234 to 1976 B.C.—a lapse of two hundred and fifty-eight years. This historian does not give any names in connection with his third dynasty of Chaldæan kings; but the name of Urukh, or Urkham, with the title of "King of Ur and Kingi-Accad," has been found stamped on the basement story of the primitive Chaldæan buildings—much older than those of Babylon—recently unearthed at Mugheir (Ur), Warka (Erech), Niffer (Nipur or Calneh), and Senkereh (Ellasar). It is believed that he belonged to the third dynasty of Berosus, and it is certain that his epoch was a remote one—probably a little earlier than 2000 B.C.

During the fourth dynasty of Berosus, a very important people in the history of the world rose into separate existence—a people so intimately associated with all the great sovereignties of Western Asia, as well as with Egypt, that it is impossible to relate the fortunes of those mighty States without first describing the origin and position of the peculiar nation with which they were brought into contact. This was the Hebrew race, which had its root in the patriarch Abraham. It was in 1996 B.C.—just twenty years before the close of the third dynasty in Chaldæa—that a certain Terah, of the posterity of Shem, dwelling at "Ur of the Chaldees" (Gen., xi. 28—31), had a son born to him who was called Abram, meaning "father of elevation," or "exalted father." The original population of Chaldæa was Hamitic, or Turanian; but in later times this had been largely qualified by Semitic elements, and it was from a Semitic stock that Abram was derived.

The Biblical account (Genesis xi. 31) is to the effect that Terah together with Abram, his son, and Sarai, the wife of Abram, went forth from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the Land of Canaan, situated on the Mediterranean, south of Phœnicia, and west of the Syrian desert. Having quitted Ur, they came in the first instance, as would appear from the narrative in Genesis, to Haran, where they dwelt. This is supposed to have been about the year 1923 B.C. Now, Haran (or, as it is called in the Acts of the Apostles, vii. 2—4, "Charran," following the Greek form) is situated near the upper course of the Euphrates, in the district called Padan-Aram in the Bible—a stretch of

* Bas-relief, from a marble slab in the British Museum, representing the King Assur-Nazir-pal seated on a throne or stool, between officers of the court holding fans or fly-flaps, one of whom presents a wine cup. From N.W. Palace, Nimroud. B.C. 884.

country lying south of Mount Masius, between the Euphrates and the Khabour. It seems, therefore, a strange route to take from the neighbourhood of what is now called Mugheir to the Land of Canaan. The commentators, as usual, are ready with their conjectural explanations; but as, after all, Ur may not be the same as Mugheir, it is hardly worth while to discuss the question minutely. At Haran the wanderers settled for a time, when, as Moses states in the Book of Genesis (chapter xii.), Abram was miraculously commanded to leave his country, his kindred, and his father's house, and pass into a land that would be shown him. He was to be made a great nation, and in him should all families of the earth be blessed. It would seem that Abram had already left his country in quitting Ur, which was apparently in the territory of the Chaldæans, and going to Haran, beyond that territory. But he was now to make another migration, and was to depart without his kindred. Nevertheless, he took with him his brother's son, Lot, together with his own wife, Sarai. The land of his settlement was to be "shown" him; but he determined in the first instance "to go into the land of Canaan," which was the original intention of Abram's father, Terah, in removing from Ur, before the miraculous voice had spoken to Abram. On arriving there (B.C. 1921), it was intimated to him that *that* was the land designed for his abiding. He therefore built an altar to the Lord in two localities, but did not immediately settle in his new inheritance. A visit to Egypt was attended by an unfortunate incident, in which Sarai and Pharaoh were concerned; and Abram then journeyed back to the vicinity of Bethel, to a spot where he had pitched his tent, and built one of his altars. The occasion of his leaving the country of Canaan so soon after entering it, had been that there was a grievous famine in the land. It is to be presumed that this had ceased before his return, in 1918 B.C.; and he was now very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold, given to him by Pharaoh while his wife (whom he had passed off as his sister) dwelt in the king's palace.

Those who affect to know more about the Bible than the Bible itself declares, and who always have ready to their hands a perfectly exhaustless stock of assumptions, allege that the Chaldæans had become so corrupted with idolatry that Jehovah for that reason commanded Terah to quit Ur. In the Book of Genesis, not one word is said about idolatry in connection with the matter; nor does it appear that Terah acted on any supernatural direction whatever. It is indeed stated in the fifteenth chapter that Jehovah brought Abram forth out of Ur of the Chaldees; but even in this place nothing appears as to a miraculous command previous to the sojourn at Haran, nor is any allegation of idolatry made either there or elsewhere, unless a passage in Joshua, xxiv. 2, may be so interpreted. The allusion to the event in the Acts of the Apostles (vii. 2, 3, 4) is probably accountable for the belief that the supernatural command to seek a new land was given to Abram before his sojourn at Haran, or Charran; for the fact is here distinctly stated.* But the account in the latter book is not at all in harmony with that in Genesis, and the earlier record would naturally seem to be the better. The idolatry of the Chaldæans at that period, however, is not improbable. The Jews, Arabians, and other Oriental races, have preserved a good deal of legendary lore about Abram and his father, Terah, from which it would appear that even the former was in early years an idolator. Terah, it is said, followed the trade of a potter, and made little earthen images for worshipping. Some of the Jews have asserted that Abram practised the same handicraft, and was a worshipper of the sun and stars until he saw the error of his ways. The account preserved by Josephus is interesting. Abram, according to that author, was a person of great sagacity, who, having higher notions of virtue than the other Chaldæans of the time, determined to change the ideas then entertained concerning the Supreme Being. He was the first, says Josephus, to proclaim the conception that there was but one God, the Creator of the universe, and that, if other heavenly beings contributed anything to the happiness of men, it was only according to their appointment, and not from their own power. This opinion of his was derived from the irregular phenomena visible both by land and sea, as well as those which happen to the sun and moon, and all the heavenly bodies. "If," he argued, "these bodies had power of their own, they would certainly maintain their regular motions; but since they do not preserve such regularity, they make it plain that, so far as they co-operate to our advantage, they are subservient to Him who commands them, and to whom alone we ought to render our homage and thanksgiving." The conversion of Abram is very beautifully related in the sixth chapter of the Koran. His later opinions seem to have been much the same as those of the Sabæans in their uncorrupted days, and may well have been entertained by a reforming

* The speaker is Stephen, the first Christian martyr, addressing the Council. Both he and Luke, the author of the Acts of the Apostles, may have been influenced by popular traditions.

Chaldæan, such as Abram. His enunciation of them, however, brought persecution upon him, and he found it necessary to forsake the country of his birth.* Regarded in this light, Abram may be considered as the prototype of religious dissenters, and the first of those who have quitted their native land for the satisfaction of their conscience. Josephus, by the way, gives as the reason for Terah leaving Ur that he had lost his son Haran in that city, and had therefore conceived a hatred of the place.

From a statement made by Nicolaus of Damascus—a contemporary and favourite of Herod the Great and Augustus—it would seem that Abram conquered and governed Damascus on his way to Canaan. The tradition of his habitation there, according to Nicolaus, was still preserved among the people, and a village in the neighbourhood was called after him. The city is certainly very ancient, and is mentioned in the fifteenth chapter of Genesis as the native place of Abram's steward, Eliezer. But it is doubtful whether the patriarch ever exercised any sovereign rights at Damascus, and at any rate the Bible is silent on this point. The Jewish and Arab traditions with respect to the founder of the Israelitish nation are numerous, and often striking. He is said to have destroyed the idols which his father made and worshipped, and to have been, for this offence, cast by Nimrod into a fiery furnace, which was straightway turned into a pleasant meadow. His opposition to idolatry commended him very particularly to Mohammed, and to this day he is called by the Arabians "El Khalíl," the Friend of God.

Shortly after the return of Abram to the neighbourhood of Bethel, he and his nephew Lot agreed to part, owing to the mountain pasturage being too scanty to support the flocks of both. A strife had ensued between the herdsmen of Lot and those of Abram; and the latter begged of the former that it might not be made the occasion of ill-will between themselves, but that each might settle peaceably in different lands. Lot chose for his portion the lower valley of the Jordan, a fertile and well-watered plain, where the Canaanites had built the five cities of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim, and Zoar, each ruled by its own petty monarch. The commerce of these cities with Syria, Arabia, Egypt, and other countries, was very great; the luxury of the inhabitants was extreme, and their vices were of unusual enormity. The subsequent destruction of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim (Zoar was spared as a place of refuge for Lot) is one of the most familiar incidents of the Book of Genesis. But before the occurrence of that catastrophe, an attempt was made by the five kings, acting in common, to throw off their tributary allegiance to Chedorlaomer, King of Elam, a country situated south of Assyria and west of Persia, where a Semitic race (if, indeed, it was really Semitic, and

THE CHOICE OF LOT.

* Antiquities of the Jews, Book I., chap. 7, par. 1.—Josephus was a Jewish historian, of priestly family, living in the first Christian century.

not, as some suppose, Turanian) had at that early date established a powerful monarchy, the rival, and even superior, of Chaldæa itself. The subjection of the five kings to Chedorlaomer had continued for twelve years, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled. In the following year (1913 B.C.) they were attacked by Chedorlaomer, and the first recorded battle in history, though probably very far from the first in fact, was fought in the plain of Siddim, part of which now forms the basin of the Dead Sea. The King of Elam was assisted by the forces of three other monarchs, described in Genesis as Amraphel, King of Shinar; Arioch, King of Ellasar; and Tidal, King of Nations. Shinar, as we have seen, was the early name of Chaldæa. Ellasar is thought to have been the town known to the Greeks as Larissa, now Senkereh, situated nearly half-way between Ur and Erech, on the Euphrates. Tidal was probably at the head of several wandering tribes occupying the country on the lower courses of the Euphrates and Tigris. From this enumeration of the kings who warred on the five cities of the plain, it is to be inferred that Chaldæa was then divided into a number of independent principalities, over which Chedorlaomer, the ruler of Elam, exercised a kind of imperial control. Sir Henry Rawlinson, in one of his notes to Herodotus, says that "Chedorlaomer may have been the leader of certain immigrant Chaldæan Elamites who founded the great Chaldæan Empire of Berosus in the early part of the twentieth century B.C.; while Amraphel and Arioch, the Hamite kings of Shinar and Ellasar, who fought under his banner as subordinate chiefs, and Tidal, who led a contingent of Median Scyths belonging to the old population, may have been the local governors who had submitted to his power when he invaded Chaldæa." Inscriptions recently interpreted show that Babylonia was conquered by the Elamites as early as 2280 B.C. For a time, the predominance of Babylon, which in earlier years had been acknowledged over a wide tract of country, was eclipsed by the glory and power of Elam; but this superiority was at length reversed.

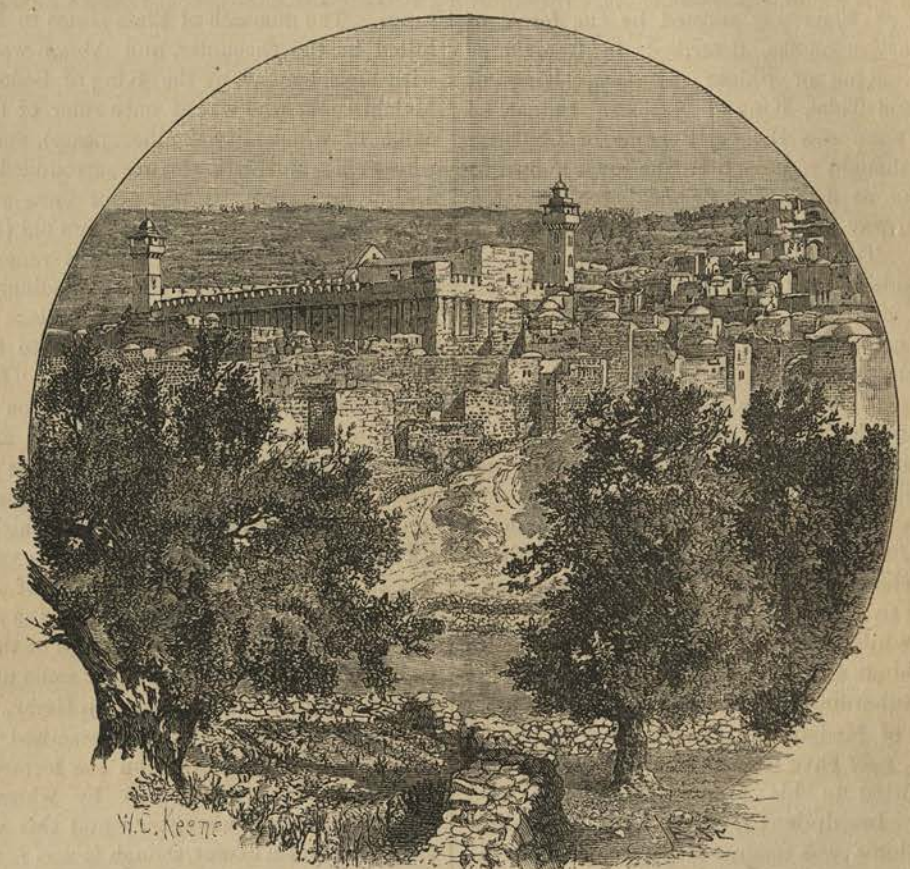
The battle fought in the plain of Siddim terminated disastrously for the kings of the five cities. The ground was full of open pits of bitumen, and the rulers of Sodom and Gomorrah, being discomfited and in flight, fell into these dangerous cavities, and perished there. The rest made for the mountains, and the victorious allies sacked Sodom and Gomorrah, and departed laden with booty. They also carried Lot away with them. Abram was at that time dwelling in the plains of Mamre; and one who had escaped from the battle came to him, and gave tidings of the fate which had overtaken his nephew. He at once armed his trained servants to the number of three hundred and eighteen, and pursued the invaders to Dan. Dividing his forces, he afterwards attacked them by night, inflicted on their ranks a severe defeat, and drove them as far as Hobah, in the vicinity of Damascus. Lot was in this way rescued from captivity, together with his women, his people, and the spoil which had been taken by the confederate kings. The monarch of Elam seems to have been killed in the encounter, and Abram was received with high honour by the King of Sodom, and by Melchizedek, who was at once ruler of Salem (the name of which city signifies peace), and a priest whose office and attributes are surrounded by a great deal of mystery.* It was after these events, and when Abram was ninety-nine years old (1898 B.C.), that the covenant with him was renewed. His posterity was to be multiplied exceedingly; he was to be the progenitor of many nations; and his name thenceforward was no longer to be Abram, "father of elevation," but Abraham, "father of a multitude." The rite of circumcision was now instituted, as a sign of the peculiar and chosen race. At the same time, the name of the patriarch's wife, Sarai, meaning, it has been suggested, "contentious," was changed to Sarah, which signifies "Princess." This was at Hebron, a very ancient city in the plains of Mamre, south of Jerusalem, and north of Beersheba; but, after the destruction of Sodom and the three other cities of the plain, in the year 1898 B.C., Abraham, for some unexplained reason, sojourned for a time in Gerar, among the Philistines. Here he again practised the deceit to which he had resorted on the former occasion. He said that the woman by whom he was accompanied was his sister; and this was indeed true to a certain extent, though it was not the whole truth. Sarah and Abraham were children of the same father, though of different mothers†; but Sarah was also the wife of Abraham, and the latter, by concealing this fact, misled both Pharaoh and Abimelech, King of Gerar. The consequences were similar in both cases; and so also was the motive for the deceit—a fear on the part of Abraham that the king, desiring to possess his wife, would get him out of the way by death.

Sarah had been childless up to ninety years of age; but she now, as recorded in the Biblical narrative, gave birth to a son, Isaac, who was to be the

* See Genesis, xiv. 18, 19, 20; Psalms, cx. 4; and Hebrews, v., vi., and vii.

† Genesis, xx. 12.

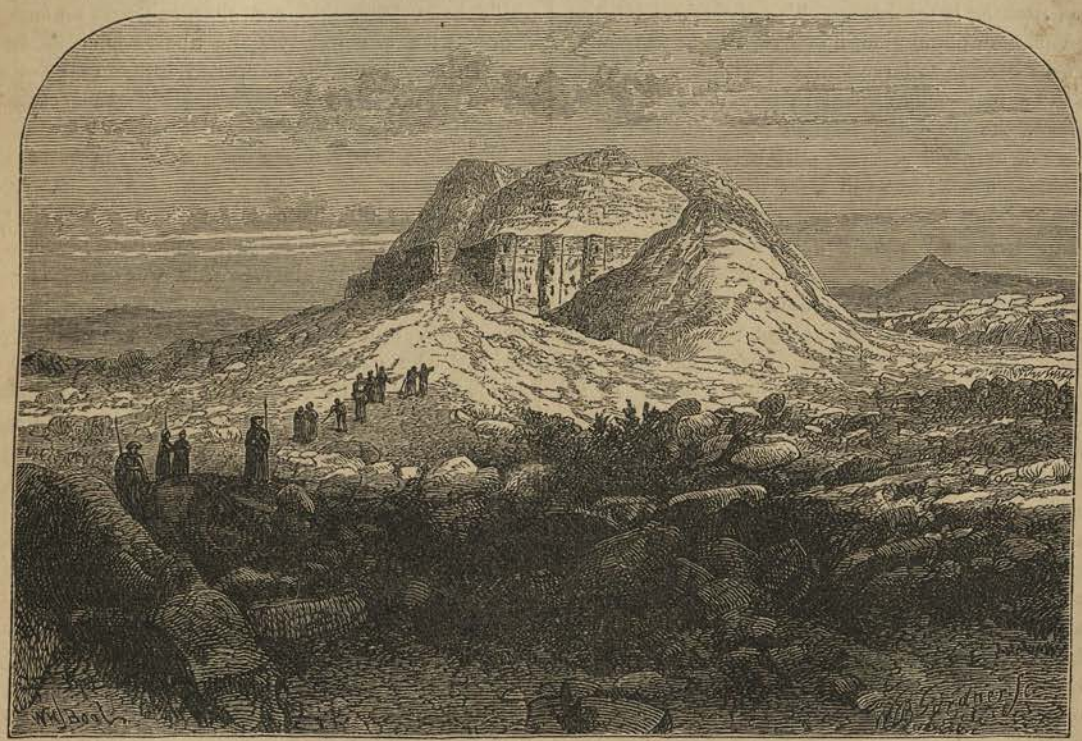
inheritor of all the promises already made to the father. She died at Hebron (to which Abraham had by that time returned), at the age of a hundred and twenty-seven, in the year 1860 B.C., according to the received chronology, and was buried in the cave of Machpelah, which Abraham purchased of Ephron the Hittite for the sum of four hundred shekels of silver. This is said to be the first commercial transaction of which we have any record, as well as the first legal conveyance of property; and it shows that standards of weight and value had already been established. The price obtained by Ephron is considered by modern commentators to have been exorbitant; but we are not sufficiently acquainted with the value of land or of money in those days to speak with certainty. Together with the cave itself, the field in which it stood, the trees that grew in the field, and the trees which were in the borders round about, were "made sure" to Abraham for a possession, in the presence of a large multitude of persons, who were the witnesses of the transaction. The cave was to be used permanently as a burial-place, and at the present day it is believed that the mosque at Hebron covers the site of this sepulchral chasm. After the death of Sarah, and the marriage of his son Isaac to Rebecca, in 1857 B.C., Abraham himself married Keturah, a woman, apparently, of somewhat humble origin. The patriarch lived to see the adolescence of his twin grandsons, Esau and Jacob (the children of Isaac), and died at the age of a hundred and seventy-five, B.C. 1822. He had other posterity, from which certain races were derived. Ishmael, the son of Abraham by his handmaiden Hagar, became the progenitor of the Bedouin Arabs; while the six sons of the patriarch by Keturah (who seems to have occupied a position inferior to that of a legitimate wife) founded some of the other Arabian tribes by intermixture with Cushites, and with the descendants of Joktan, one of the race of Shem. These branches of the family were sent by Abraham into distant regions, that they might not disturb the inheritance of Isaac. That inheritance was "the promised land,"—



MOSQUE AT HEBRON.

formerly Canaan, but now to be regarded as the country of the Israelites.

The feuds of Esau and Jacob are so well known from the Biblical records, and are so little connected with the main currents of Universal History, that it is unnecessary here to describe them in detail. Jacob, when in his seventy-eighth year, was obliged, in order to avoid the anger of his elder brother, whom he had defrauded of his birthright, to seek a refuge with his kindred in Padan-Aram (Mesopotamia), where he married the daughters of Laban, his mother's brother. There he passed about twenty years in voluntary servitude, and finally determined to re-enter his native country (B.C. 1739). He was by this time the possessor—not always by honest means—of great wealth in flocks, herds, and slaves, and was the father of eleven sons. But the Land of Promise was very much under the control of the Amorites, one of the races originally possessing the country of Canaan before the entry of the Israelites; and Jacob speedily came into collision with them. His enterprises were fortunate in their issues, and his power, which was that of a patriarchal ruler, was not curtailed by the animosity of his foes. Isaac, the father of Jacob, died at Hebron in the year 1716 B.C., when he had attained his one hundred and eightieth year. The Israelites had now become a people of some importance. They were no longer a tribe, but a nation; and they had acquired a distinct position in the world, which brought them into contact with other and much more powerful communities, and led to events which form some of the most prominent landmarks of ancient times. The name of Israel was in the first instance given to Jacob on his wrestling with the angel at Peniel, as related in the thirty-second chapter of Genesis; afterwards it was taken as the title of the twelve tribes collectively; and at a much later epoch it was used as the appellation of one of the two kingdoms into which the Hebrew territory was divided. The word is said to mean "soldier of God."



ANCIENT RUINS AT MUGHEIR.

The power of the Elamite sovereigns appears to have been broken, though not destroyed, by Abraham's defeat of Chedorlaomer. The fourth Chaldæan dynasty of Berosus is said to have consisted of forty-nine monarchs, ruling from 1976 to 1518 B.C.; but not more than fifteen or sixteen names of kings have been discovered on the ancient monuments. During this period, the seat of power was gradually removed up the valley of the Euphrates, first from Ur to other cities, and finally

to Babylon. The bounds of the empire were extended during the same time, so as probably to include the whole of Mesopotamia; but the fourth dynasty was at length overthrown by an invasion of Arabs from the desert, who, according to Berosus, furnished the country with nine kings during a space of two hundred and forty-five years. This was the fifth dynasty, and it is conjectured that the dates of its commencement and its close were 1518 and 1273 B.C. Of the events of Chaldæan history during those two centuries and a half, nothing is recorded. The aboriginal Cushite or Turanian population, however, had in the course of ages become so largely mixed with Semitic blood as to be materially altered in its character. The priests, the Magi, the learned men, and the practisers of arts and sciences, still belonged to the old Chaldaic stock; but the mass of the people were now probably Semitic, as appears from their having adopted a Semitic form of speech. The race of Ham, nevertheless, had made a deep impression on the world, and its achievements in all that ennobles life were the most splendid and remarkable in the history of those primitive times. Chaldæa and Egypt were the founders of civilisation. It has been observed by a modern historian that alphabetic writing, astronomy, history, chronology, architecture, plastic art, sculpture, navigation, agriculture, and textile industry, seem all to have had their origin in the land of Nimrod, or the land of the Pharaohs.* Chaldæa was certainly remarkable for the practice of several arts at a very early age. From an examination of the ancient tombs found at Mugheir, the former Ur, it is evident that the people were capable of making various articles of ornament, lamps, tools, weapons, works in gold, copper, and other metals, linen cerements, mats, tasselled cushions, and dresses of striped and embroidered stuff, which would even now be considered beautiful. The excellent preservation of the contents of these tombs (which are substantially built of brick) is a surprising fact when we consider their immense age. The clay coffins yet remain, and within them are seen the skeletons of the dead, reposing on mats, or with the skull supported on a species of pillow. That the Chaldæans were great astronomers, we have already observed. They were also the contrivers of a system of weights and measures, upon which all later systems have to some extent been founded. Decimal notation was not unknown to them. It is probable that they mapped out the zodiac, invented a nomenclature for the days of the week similar to that now used (giving, that is to say, the names of the sun and moon, and of certain gods, to the several portions of time), divided the day into equinoctial hours, and measured time by the water-clock.† The impressive phenomena of eclipses were observed by them with great attention and accuracy, and it cannot be questioned that they handed down to later ages a large amount of valuable information with reference to the movements of the celestial bodies. With these really scientific investigations, however, they mingled some of the wild fancies of judicial astrology, and are chargeable in no small degree with the extravagant aberrations of the modern world on the supposed influence of the stars and planets over the character and destinies of men.

But while the Chaldean Monarchy was pursuing its course in the lower plains of Mesopotamia, another great kingdom arose on the further side of the Tigris, and gradually attained the loftiest summit of human glory. This was Assyria—a name associated with every form of Oriental splendour, and every manifestation of Asiatic pride. The country bearing that title was probably confined in the first instance to a small tract of lowland between the Gebel Makloub and the Lesser Zab, on the eastern bank of the Tigris. In time, however, these limits were much enlarged, so as to comprise the whole region between the Armenian mountains on the north, the country about the comparatively modern Baghdad on the south, the mountains of Kurdistan on the east, and perhaps the Euphrates on the west. This gives a dominion of nearly five hundred miles in length, and of a breadth varying from a hundred to three hundred and fifty miles. Of the general character of the territory thus delineated, it may suffice to say that the northern and north-eastern parts are mountainous, while farther south the land sinks down suddenly into the vast Mesopotamian plain, which is broken only by the Sinjar range of hills. The climate is cooler than that of Chaldæa, and the pastures, shadowed every here and there with woods, and freshened by numerous streams running into the Tigris, are still brilliant in spring with many-coloured flowers, though the summer parches them into a wide expanse of yellow barrenness, except along the courses of the rivers, where a track of green betrays the windings of the channel. The arable soil of the valleys is extremely productive, and the mountains towards Armenia and Kurdistan are rich in minerals. Many of the Greek and Roman historians use the term Assyria so as to

* Professor Rawlinson. "Five Great Monarchies."

† "History of the World," by Philip Smith, 1864.

include, not merely Mesopotamia in its largest signification, but Asia Minor in the one direction, and sometimes Syria in the other. But this was a very loose and inexact description, and we are not warranted in giving to Assyria any greater dimensions than those which have just been indicated.

The flat grounds on the banks of the Tigris are covered, like the plains of Chaldæa, with grass-clad heaps of earth, marking the sites of ancient buildings. Here is the scene of Mr. Layard's explorations, and the soil has rendered to the investigator remains of architecture and sculpture possessing the highest interest, and adding largely to our knowledge of the mighty kingdom which had Nineveh for its capital. From one spot, Mr. Layard counted nearly a hundred of these mounds; from another, more than two hundred. They are found on both banks of the Tigris, but especially on the eastern, whence they extend as far as Khorsabad and Karamless. Some are of such immense size that at a little distance they may easily be mistaken for natural hills; and several are found to terminate in broad, flat summits, from which the sloping sides descend like the sides of a cliff, with deep ravines and furrows, worn in them by the winter torrents. The most important ruins are those situated east of the Tigris, opposite the town of Mosul. Here the traveller observes an enclosure formed by a continuous line of mounds, resembling a vast embankment of earth, which, upon examination, proves to be the remains of a wall, the western face of which is broken by two great prominences. At Nimroud, to the south of Mosul, in the angle formed by the junction of the Tigris with the Greater Zab (the ancient Lycus), are other huge masses, full of curious relics; and the mounds at Khorsabad have also yielded much to the zeal of modern research. The precise situation of Nineveh was long unknown, although by many not incorrectly conjectured; but the investigations of Mr. Layard, M. Botta, and others, enable us to fix it with certainty. Through a long series of ages, successive generations contemplated with a certain awe and dread the enormous lines of hills, evidently artificial in their origin, which stretched along the banks of the Tigris, and guessed that somewhere within their circuit was hidden all that remained of the great city which once daunted western Asia with its superb and tyrannous beauty. But men seemed disinclined to disturb the great heaps of earth and mouldering rubbish which covered the ground; and Nineveh, like Babylon, continued to be a dream, which neither the ignorant nor the learned cared to identify with any tangible reality.

The first traveller who made anything like a serious attempt to examine the ruins of ancient Assyria was Mr. Rich, the Political Resident of the East India Company at Baghdad. In the year 1820, while staying at Mosul, this gentleman was attracted by the great mounds which he beheld on the opposite bank of the river, and determined to make as many inquiries as his time permitted. The people of Mosul told him that a piece of sculpture, representing figures of men and animals, had recently been dug out of one of these heaps. The object had caused general amazement; but one of the doctors of the Mohammedan law having pronounced the carving to be an idol, worshipped by the infidels in bygone days, the people had completely destroyed it. Mr. Rich visited the hamlet containing what is called the tomb of Jonah, and found in the houses a few stones bearing cuneiform inscriptions. Under the mosque containing the tomb, he was shown three very narrow and apparently ancient passages, with several doors or apertures. These passages he did not explore; but he made some investigations into the largest of the mounds opposite Mosul, called Kouyunjik by the Turks, and collected fragments of pottery, inscribed bricks, and other objects. Shortly afterwards he visited Nimroud, and was struck with the antique appearance of the place. But his pursuits did not allow of anything more than a cursory examination of these historic sites, and little was thought about Nineveh until, in the spring of 1840, Mr. Layard, as he then was, visited the ruins opposite Mosul, and others on the western bank of the Tigris. He was unable to do anything in the way of exploration at that time; but he formed a resolution to revisit the country at the earliest opportunity, and to open some of those wonderful mounds, which evidently contained priceless relics of a dead and nearly forgotten past.

In the meanwhile, he frequently spoke to others on the subject of excavations; and about 1843, M. Botta, who had been appointed French consul at Mosul, began to dig into the large mound of Kouyunjik, on the eastern side of the Tigris. The first results were insignificant; but the explorer persevered, owing in some measure to the encouragement he received from Mr. Layard, who had failed to interest any one in England on behalf of Assyrian explorations. At length, however, M. Botta brought to light, at Khorsabad, the remains of a palace, the walls of which were covered with sculptured representations of battles, sieges, and other great events. Inscriptions in arrow-headed characters were also visible; but they could not be interpreted by any one present. Unfortunately,

moreover, the building had been subjected to the action of fire, and the gypsum slabs of which the walls were composed, having been reduced to the condition of lime, rapidly fell to pieces on exposure to the air. The French consul afterwards pursued his investigations by the help of a grant from his Government, and was soon enabled to enrich the Louvre with a grand collection of Assyrian antiquities. Nevertheless, it was obvious that the ruins at Khorsabad could not have formed the principal part of Nineveh, as their situation was too far from the Tigris. In that case, other and greater monuments were in all probability to be found nearer the river, if sufficient pains and labour were bestowed upon the soil. It was not until 1845, and even then only at his own risk and that of the English Ambassador at Constantinople, Sir Stratford Canning (afterwards Lord Stratford de Redcliffe), that Mr. Layard was in a position to conduct the explorations of which he had long dreamed. The magnificent results attending his enterprise cannot be specifically described in this place. They belong rather to the records of antiquarian research than to general history; yet it must not be forgotten that history is largely indebted to these investigations for a more exact knowledge of the great Assyrian Monarchy than any we before possessed, and that many of the statements in the Biblical narrative have received from them very striking confirmation.

The discoveries of Mr. Layard took place between the years 1845 and 1851, and were carried out at Nimroud and Kouyunjik. They naturally excited the highest interest, and ultimately the expenses of exploration were defrayed by Parliament, which placed a grant of money at the disposal of the British Museum. The grant was extremely inadequate to the demands of the work, and considerably less than that which the French Government had conferred on M. Botta; yet Mr. Layard pursued his labours with diligence and success, and uncovered fresh objects of the utmost interest. In the opinion of the latter explorer, the ruins at Nimroud, Kouyunjik, and Khorsabad, extending irregularly over a district of about thirty miles in length, all formed portions of the vast Assyrian capital, which, according to Strabo, was larger even than Babylon; but other inquirers believe these distinct remains to have belonged to different cities. "The great mounds and earthen ramparts still existing," says Mr. Layard, "represent, it may be conjectured, royal residences surrounded by walls and fortifications, within which were enclosed hunting-grounds and gardens, rather than fixed habitations. They resembled, in fact, the paradises or parks of the Persian kings. The space between these quarters was occupied by private houses standing in the midst of gardens, orchards, and corn-land. Different kings probably built such royal residences or quarters for themselves, giving to them a new name; and thus, in the course of time, different names came to be given to different parts of the city."* Diodorus Siculus states the measurements of the city at a hundred and fifty stadia for the two longer sides of the quadrangle, and ninety for the two shorter; so that the complete square must have been four hundred and eighty stadia, equal to about sixty of our miles. A square formed by the great ruins on the east bank of the Tigris, taking Nimroud, Kouyunjik, Khorsabad, and Karamless as the four corners, would give, according to Mr. Layard, very nearly the same result. The entire area, it would seem, was left without any enclosing wall, in this respect resembling Damascus, Ispahan, Delhi, and some other Oriental cities at the present day; and it is conjectured that at times of peril the population took refuge within the fortifications surrounding the royal palaces. The authority of Sir Henry Rawlinson, however, is against the supposition that these distinct masses of buildings, isolated by walls, bearing separate names, and divided from one another by spaces of open country, formed one city.

A certain similarity of design characterises most of these Assyrian edifices. They appear to have been reared on artificial mounds or platforms, rising thirty, and sometimes fifty, feet above the level of the plain; constructed either of sun-dried bricks, or of earth and rubbish, and probably faced with stone. Broad flights of steps, or inclined ways, led up to the summit, from which the building itself soared into the bright Mesopotamian air. The upper story was constructed of bricks and timber; and it is the decay of these higher portions which has preserved the lower chambers by burying them. The basement, in the several instances examined, consisted of halls, galleries, and smaller sections, usually opening into large uncovered courts; and the walls in these parts were lined on the inside with alabaster slabs for a portion of their height, above which the brickwork was plastered, and painted with a variety of figures and ornaments. As the kings of Assyria had a priestly no less than a monarchical character, these magnificent buildings were partly palaces and partly temples. They

* Nineveh and its Remains, by Austen Henry Layard, M.P., D.C.L. Chap. 13. Edition 1867.

represent the most developed forms of Assyrian art, and range from about 930 B.C., the era of Sardanapalus, to 625 B.C., the period of the destruction of the city. Of their general aspect, we can at the present day form only an approximate idea; but there can be no doubt that it was extremely gorgeous and imposing. Size and space, amplitude of surroundings, beauty of outline, and splendour of decoration, were alike conspicuous in the buildings of the Ninevite sovereigns. While included within the circuit of the great city, they were isolated from all other edifices by zones of open ground, where range after range of gigantic portals, flanked by symbolical figures of human-headed and winged bulls, made a stately and even solemn approach to the palaces they guarded. In the structures themselves, colonnades, exhibiting a marked similarity to the later Ionic style of the Greeks, supported the open galleries which formed the upper story. Above this was a carved and richly decorated cornice, where the Hellenes found the first conception of their honeysuckle adornments; while above the cornice rose a battlemented parapet approached by steps, where, it is to be presumed, the archers kept watch and ward over the sacred precincts and the kingly house.

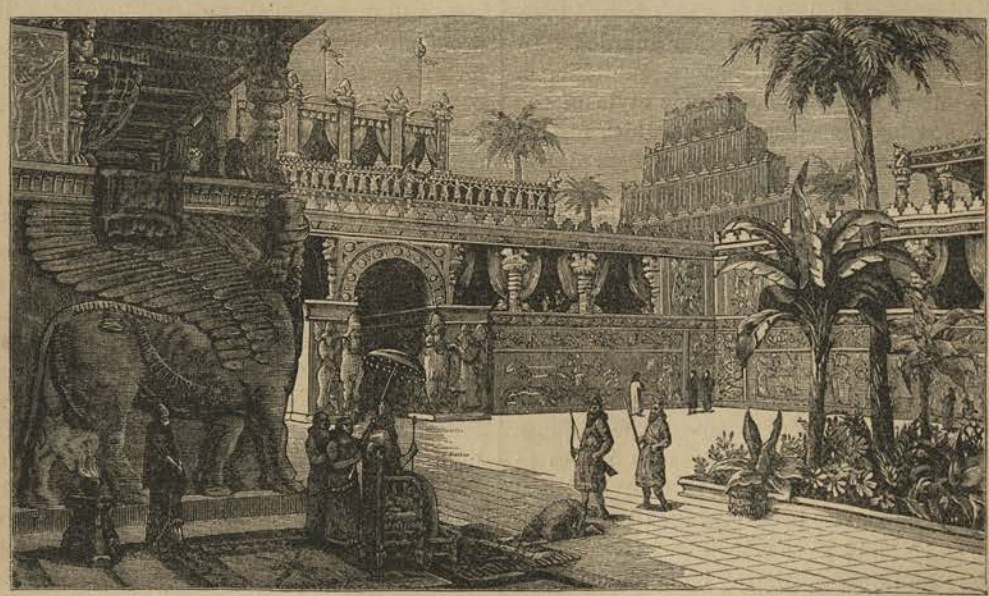
If the exterior of these temple-palaces was grand and regal, the inside was superb with all the flaming magnificence of barbaric pomp. The ceilings were of that costly cedar-wood which makes so great a figure in the Bible, and in other Oriental records; the timber was probably inlaid with ivory; vermilion and gilding gave brightness to the severer substances; and these glittering roofs looked down on walls which were alive with varied sculpture, and brilliant with many colours. Everywhere was gold, illuminating the shadowy interspaces with reflected light; everywhere the warmth of sumptuous hues qualified the colder tints of carven stone. The walls were historical records, pourtraying in lively forms the doings of the Great Kings, the pride of conquest, the insolence of dominion, or the humbleness of subject tribes. The human-headed bull, the human-headed lion, the placid and inexorable sphinx, darkened the glow with suggestions of dim meaning; awful shapes of gods and genii frowned on the pageantry of slavish worshippers and tyrannous priests; and from the very substance of the pile religious invocations broke forth, inscribed in those mysterious characters which have recently been delivered from the dumbness of accumulated years. But, however magnificent, these buildings were wanting in the massiveness which distinguished the great edifices of Babylonia and of Egypt. The upper part of the columns appears to have been of cedar-wood, and wood entered largely into the composition of the higher stories. When exposed to the action of fire, this timber would of course be readily consumed, forming a charred residuum, of which many evidences are still discoverable, and which helped to protect the basements from destruction. A further envelopment must have been contributed by the earth which, in accordance with a frequent Asiatic practice, was piled upon the roofs to the height of five or six feet, to keep out heat and wet. Any portion of the walls still left exposed would naturally crumble away with the mere effect of time; and the inevitable deposit of centuries would bury still deeper all that remained uninjured of the proud city on the Tigris. Thus, palace and temple, fortress and dwelling-house, sank into the oblivion of the grave, and the mightiest capital of antiquity passed out of the knowledge of men, until strangers from a distant region disinterred the ruins of its shattered strength.

The sculptures and paintings in the Ninevite palaces have preserved to the present day a vivid representation of daily life and manners in the Assyrian Empire. Though somewhat stiff, and occasionally conventional in their treatment, the figures here represented are often characterised by considerable liveliness and power, and the action is full of movement, reality, and progress. Nineveh lives again in the works of her nameless artists. We see monarch, and priest, and noble, their hair falling in massive ringlets, their beards plaited with glittering threads, their habiliments stiff with gold, and embroidered with strange devices. Soldiers are before us in the splendour of shining arms, the glory of disciplined ranks, the grandeur of the ordered phalanx. Deities and embodied virtues—the monstrous fantasies of a symbolism which perplexed rather than elucidated the sphinx-like riddle of the world—look at us eye to eye out of this resurrection of the past. The king goes forth to battle in his pride, and returns in the intoxication of his triumph. He hunts the lion, and throws his unerring spear from the car in which he rides. The horses strain at the curb, trample the air in their fiery impatience, or display the brightness of their regal trappings. Youthful warriors, careering on steeds which older warriors guide, or standing erect in chariots of war, draw the bow against the enemies of Asshur. Camels, elephants, bulls, march past in gaunt or ponderous procession. The city is taken by assault, and the ladders, planted against the wall, swarm with invincible men-at-arms. Idols from vanquished lands are carried before the people, and miserable captives bear tribute to the feet

of the Great King, or suffer impalement and other tortures. All is military, sacerdotal, and superb. The common facts of life are lost in the epic of a cruel and exultant sovereignty.

The precise size of Nineveh is variously stated by different authors; but, at the lowest computation, it must have been very large. Diodorus Siculus says that the walls were a hundred feet high, and so broad that three chariots might be driven on them abreast. These walls were strengthened by fifteen hundred towers, each two hundred feet in height; and the city was believed to be impregnable—a conviction which, like many others of the same character, proved to be erroneous. Of the external walls, nothing now remains but the long lines of mounds enclosing the ruins of Nimroud, Khorsabad, and Kouyunjik; but several of the city gates have been discovered by Mr. Layard and M. Place. One of these was evidently intended for wheeled carriages, as appears by the deep ruts in the pavement, which are not visible in the other cases. The gate for foot-passengers is ornamented with slabs representing human-headed and winged bulls, by the side of which stand colossal figures strangling lions. Both have semi-circular arches; for the arch, which until recently was supposed to have been a Roman invention, was known to the Assyrians and the Egyptians. Besides the discoveries already mentioned, others of very great importance have been made by Mr. Hormuzd Rassam (a Chaldæan Christian employed in the English service), and by the late Mr. George Smith, who died at Aleppo in 1876, after publishing some works on this subject.

How far the arts of Assyria were derived from Babylonia, is an open question, which has led to much debate, but for the settlement of which we have not sufficient materials. That the Chaldæan Monarchy rose to importance before the Assyrian, is very certain, and it is therefore probable that the arts, the political system, and the general civilisation of the latter were products of the former. But it has also been suggested that both nationalities may have developed simultaneously, or that their conceptions were equally derived from one common source—some still more ancient civilisation, which has left no records of its existence. The arts of Egypt have a character distinct in many respects from those of Assyria, though similar, perhaps, in some others. It has been conjectured, however, that the Phœnicians, being situated geographically between Assyria and Egypt, may have furnished both with the rudiments of their architecture, sculpture, and painting. The commerce of Phœnicia is not unlikely to have disseminated ideas on various subjects to right and left, although art is not one of the subjects in which that mercantile republic appears to have specially distinguished itself. Chaldæa, Assyria, and Egypt, were undoubtedly the three conspicuously artistic countries of primitive times, so far, at any rate, as



ASSYRIAN PALACE, RESTORED.

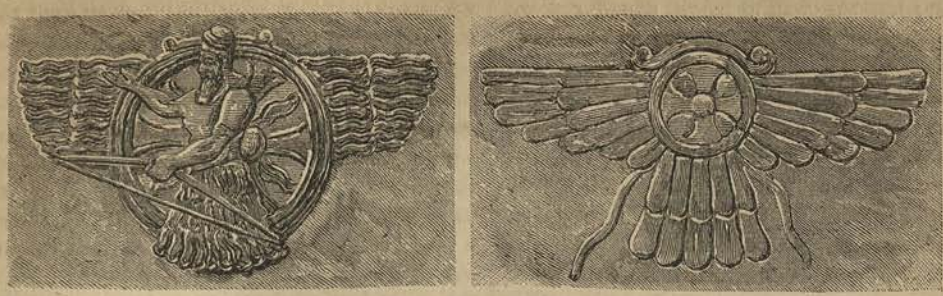
PROCESSION OF THE BULL. (*From Layard's "Nineveh."*)

our knowledge extends; but which was the originator of these forms of culture, or whether there were many distinct and simultaneous origins, it is impossible to say.

Much of Assyrian art was symbolical. The human-headed figures of winged bulls and lions, which stood at the doorways of palaces and the gates of cities, were not mere phantasms, or creatures of a distorted imagination, but shapes expressing certain abstract ideas by the visible types most likely to be understood in the sense intended. The bull signified strength; the lion, regality; the human face, wisdom and knowledge; the wings, swiftness or ubiquity. But there was also a religious reference in these chimeras. It is supposed that the bull and the lion were identified with the gods Nin and Nergal, the first of whom (probably an apotheosis of Nimrod) presided over the chase, and the latter over war. The eagle-headed and fish-headed figures found in numerous sculptures, and in the ornaments of vessels, were possibly Nisroch and Dagon, two of the most famous of the Ninevite idols. The Greek, Polyhistor, professing to record, on the authority of Berosus, certain Chaldæan traditions as to the origin of the world, relates that there was a time in which nothing existed but darkness and an abyss of waters, wherein resided many hideous beings, strangely and incongruously compounded of the several parts of other animals. This was said to be an allegorical description of the generative powers of Nature; and it is added by Polyhistor that delineations of all these monstrous creatures were preserved in the Temple of Belus at Babylon. Here, doubtless, we have the origin of the composite figures found in the Ninevite sculptures. Unlike the Egyptians, the Assyrians appear scarcely ever to have represented scenes of humble or industrial life in their sculptures and paintings. At any rate, no such subjects have yet been discovered among the ruins, except in the occasional form of accessories to the more dignified exploits of princes, priests, and warriors. In these Oriental despotisms, the people were generally held to be of small account, and, in the case of Assyria, we can only guess that the lives of the commonalty were those of serfs, to which, perhaps, a splendid climate, and the easy conditions of existence, offered some alleviation.

From the historical point of view, the most interesting of the Ninevite relics are those inscribed objects which, in the hands of the interpreter, have been made to yield considerable information as to the events of ancient days. Arrow-headed writings have been found on slabs of stone and marble, on bricks, on clay cylinders, and on six-sided and eight-sided prisms, barrels, and tablets. The Assyrian cuneiform character was similar to the Babylonian, though somewhat less complicated. Nearly four hundred signs go to the formation of this primitive alphabet, so that the difficulty of deciphering the inscriptions must have been great indeed. The results, however, are well worthy of the pains taken to secure them. Complete chronicles of the reigns of several Assyrian monarchs, and especially of Sennacherib, have thus been rescued from oblivion, and it is probable that more will yet be obtained. "The people of Nineveh," says Mr. Layard, "spoke a Semitic dialect, connected with the Hebrew, and with the so-called Chaldee of the Books of Daniel and Ezra. This agrees with the testimony of the Old Testament. But it is asserted that there existed in Assyria, as well as in Babylonia, a more ancient tongue belonging to a Turanian or Scythic race, which is supposed to have inhabited the plains watered by the Tigris and Euphrates long before the rise of the Assyrian Empire, and from which the Assyrians derived their civilisation, and the greater part of their mythology."* It is probable that the earth had a history even more ancient than that of Chaldæa, Assyria, and Egypt; but, if so, it has disappeared into the utter blackness of an unrecorded past. We must be content with the reflection that we can go back further than our ancestors, and that in our day the very recesses of the soil have yielded instruction in the annals of some of the most interesting races of the world, the realities of whose existenee had been almost lost in the *chiar'-oscuro* of tradition.

* Smith's Dictionary of the Bible. Art. "Nineveh."



EMBLEMS OF THE DEITY.*

CHAPTER III.

THE KINGDOM OF ASSYRIA.

Spread of the Chaldæan Race—Movements of the Phœnicians—Obscurity of the early Assyrian Annals—Mythical Story of Semiramis—Greek Traditions of Sardanapalus—Assyrian Dynasties, according to Berosus—Reigns of the principal Kings, according to the Cuneiform Inscriptions—Union of Assyria and Babylonia under Esar-haddon—Splendid Edifices of Esar-haddon—Royal Library of Assyria—Defective Governmental System—Fall of Nineveh and Destruction of the Empire—Researches and Historical Conclusions of the late Mr. George Smith—Early Disappearance of Nineveh—Absorption of Assyria in other Empires—General Character of Assyrian Civilisation.

In the early ages of the world, we find the Semitic race (to adopt the ethnology of the Bible) frequently gaining on that which proceeded from Ham, even where the latter still exercised some species of sovereignty. Thus, Chaldæa became, with each successive era, more and more Semitic in its population, although the original stock retained its supremacy in art, science, letters, and the mysteries of priestcraft. Before the emigration of Abraham and his family into Canaan—which was in itself a Semitic invasion of a land originally Hamitic—the Phœnicians, who took their rise to the east of Lebanon, had crossed that mountain barrier, and established themselves on the long strip of coast, bordering on the Mediterranean, which appears to have been, until then, regarded as part of the Canaanitish territory. The origin and precise nature of the Phœnicians are obscure; but it seems likely that there was an early and pre-historic immigration of Semites into the northern part of Canaan—the part afterwards called Phœnicia. The Phœnicians of the historic eras must therefore be regarded as partly Hamitic, and partly Semitic: Hamitic in the mass of the population, and Semitic in the conquering and ruling classes. It is probable that Assyria was peopled from Chaldæa, and that consequently the original germ of the populace was Hamitic, although the race of Shem afterwards acquired a predominance. The account in the tenth chapter of Genesis connects Asshur (whether as a person or a province) with the kingdom founded by Nimrod, one of whose cities was Babel; and Asshur was the native name for Assyria. Herodotus states that Ninus, the mythic founder of Nineveh, was the son or descendant of Belus, the mythic founder of Babylon. It is a somewhat curious and noteworthy fact that, even to the present day, the local tradition among the people of Mesopotamia is that the ancient buildings, of which the ruins are to be seen on the banks of the Tigris, were erected by Nimrod, no less than those of Babylon. According to the popular chronology accepted in this part of the world, Babylon and Nineveh were commenced about the same year—2245 B.C.; yet, even if this be so, it is none the less true that the Chaldæan power (the original seat of which was at Ur, or perhaps at Accad) preceded the Assyrian.

The story of Semiramis is fabulous in the main; yet it was so long received as truth, and still occupies so conspicuous a position in literature, that it would not be proper to omit it altogether. It is recorded by ancient writers that this magnificent Queen was the daughter of the goddess Derceto by a young Assyrian. Having been exposed in a

* The one with the figure is from embroidery on the robe of the king in the slab shown on p. 20; the other from a marble slab representing the campaigns of Asskur-nazir-pal, where it occurs above the chariot of the king. The circle is supposed to represent eternity; the wings, omnipresence; and the human figure, wisdom or intelligence.

desert, her life was preserved by doves during a whole year; but she was at length discovered by Simmas, one of the shepherds of Ninus, first sovereign of Assyria according to the Greek traditions. He brought her up as his own child, and when she was a woman she married Menones, the Governor of Nineveh, whom she accompanied to the siege of Bactra (the capital of Bactria), the conquest of which was in a great measure due to her advice. Her extraordinary beauty, combined with the high mental powers of which she had given proof, recommended her to Ninus, who pursued her with so much ardour that Menones hung himself. Semiramis then married the king, by whom she had a son called Ninyas. Ninus had already distinguised himself as a conqueror. Diodorus Siculus relates that, with the assistance of Ariæus, an Arabian chief, he conquered Babylonia (of which he had been a vassal), made Armenia tributary, subjected Media to his dominion, and compelled all the nations of south-western Asia, with only two exceptions, to acknowledge the supremacy of the Assyrians; after which he founded the city of Nineveh, named after himself, and called Ninus by the Greeks. His love of Semiramis, however, proved a fatal passion. The nature of this woman was ambitious, and her power over Ninus was so unbounded, that the monarch surrendered into her hands the entire sovereignty of the empire. Soon afterwards she put her husband to death, that her supremacy might not at any time be revoked, and, being thus delivered from all fear, addressed her mind to the improvement of her dominions.

HUMAN-HEADED LION. (*From Layard's "Nineveh."*)

The Greek and Roman traditions gave Semiramis the credit of having either built, or at least enlarged and improved, the city of Babylon; and Herodotus says that she raised several mounds along the plain, by which mounds the Euphrates was withheld from overflowing the level pastures like a sea. On the chief high-road of her dominions, she erected a large obelisk, laid out a beautiful park in Media, and ordered that figures of herself and a hundred of her attendants, with inscriptions in the Assyrian tongue, should be cut in the face of the neighbouring eminence, Mount Bagistanum. Moving constantly from one part of her extensive empire to another, accompanied by a large army, she left monuments of her greatness and power in every place she visited. Mountains were hollowed, valleys were filled up, and water was conveyed in aqueducts to the barren deserts which needed cultivation. Ecbatana, the capital of Media, is said to have been adorned by her hands, and Armenian writers state that she founded a magnificent town near Lake Van. Her martial conquests were also numerous: she subjugated the greater part of Libya and Æthiopia, and once, when informed that Babylon had revolted, refused to complete her toilet until the sedition had been quelled. She likewise, according to Diodorus Siculus, made war on Stabrobates, an Indian king, when the operations of her army were supplemented by those of a fleet upon the river Indus. This expedition, however, was fatal to her power; for, after achieving some successes, she was entirely defeated, and escaped wounded, and with the wreck of her army, to Assyria, where it is said she was murdered by her son Ninyas. Some accounts state that she was killed in the battle with the Indian king; others, that she was suddenly snatched up to heaven, and thenceforward received immortal honours among the Assyrians. It is supposed that she lived about 1965 years B.C., and that she died in the sixty-second year of her age, and the twenty-fifth of her reign.

The story thus related by several of the classic writers is to a great extent mythical; but it is doubtless not entirely without foundation. The name of Semiramis occurs in the cuneiform inscriptions discovered at Nineveh, and now preserved in the British Museum; nevertheless, scarcely anything is known about her with certainty. It is said that her passions were as violent as her will; and

many of the mounds of buried ruins on the Tigris have been popularly designated "the graves of the lovers of Semiramis." Nothing is more likely than that such a woman should have been licentious in her life; but we have little beyond tradition to help us to a conception of her character. Ninyas, her son and successor, is represented as a feeble prince, and those who followed him appear to have been equally weak and uninteresting, until, after thirty generations, we come to Sardanapalus, the last of the fabulous or semi-fabulous monarchs of Assyria. This king, according to the Greek traditions, was conspicuous for luxury and voluptuousness. His life was passed in the midst of women and eunuchs; and it is even said that, like Hercules when under the influence of Omphale, he dressed himself in female clothes, and spun wool for his amusement. Arbaces, his satrap in Media, was so exasperated at finding him one day engaged in this manner, that, returning to his province, he organised a conspiracy against the throne. He was joined by Belesis, a Babylonian or Chaldæan priest, and the united forces marched against Nineveh. Sardanapalus made a vain attempt at concealment, according to some accounts; according to others, he placed himself at the head of his armies, marched out to meet the rebels, and defeated them in three important battles. Considering himself safe, he then resumed his voluptuous life, and gave a grand feast to his army; but Arbaces was recovering his strength and reorganizing his forces, and the result of this perseverance was soon apparent. The royal camp was surprised, and the king, accompanied by a few followers, was forced to take refuge within the walls of his capital. Here he was besieged for two years, when, finding further resistance hopeless, he ordered a funeral pyre to be made, on which he burned himself, his women, his eunuchs, and his treasure. Arbaces then took the city, and Assyria became subject to the Medes. The date of this event is assigned by various writers to different years; but in truth there is very slight historical foundation for the story. By some modern investigators, Sardanapalus has been identified with the two-sexed god, Sandon, and Semiramis with the goddess Derceto. These speculations, however, are apt to be somewhat over-subtle. The cuneiform inscriptions allude both to Semiramis and to Sardanapalus, but give us no exact idea of their lives and reigns. The Greek traditions are not likely to be entirely false; but they are certainly confused and exaggerated.

It is evident that the Assyrians excited great interest in the minds of the Hellenes. The twentieth successor of Ninyas, named Teutamus, is said to have been contemporary with the Trojan war, and to have sent a body of troops to the assistance of Priam, under the command of Memnon, King of Æthiopia. Herodotus writes about Assyria in his first, second, and fourth books, and alludes to a distinct Assyrian history which he proposed to compile, but of which, if it ever existed, nothing now remains. One of his statements is that the Empire of Nineveh had lasted five hundred and twenty years before the revolt of the Medes. Ctesias says that the monarchy endured for more than thirteen centuries; while the figures given by Eusebius are 1,280 years, and by Syncellus 1,460. Eusebius and Syncellus, however, lived in the fourth and eighth Christian centuries; so that their testimony as to Assyrian matters cannot be of any great value. Nothing can be more inexact than the chronology of old writers, and these figures are worth repeating only as showing how little was known by Greek and Roman authors as to the annals of Assyria. By a very excusable mistake, Herodotus mixes up that kingdom with the Babylonian Monarchy; and in no ancient work can we find anything like a connected or reasonable narrative of events in the great realm which once exacted and obtained so much homage from surrounding countries.

It has been supposed that the independence of Assyria, as a kingdom distinct from Chaldæa, or Babylonia, was consequent on the subjugation of the latter by the Arabs forming the fifth dynasty of Berosus. This dynasty is said to have commenced in 1518 B.C., and to have terminated in 1273. At what date in that period of two hundred and forty-five years the Assyrians established a separate monarchy, is uncertain; but, at the close of the epoch in question, we find them not only independent, but capable of imposing their sovereignty, to some extent, over the Babylonians who had formerly held them in subjection. The names of several kings, some of them great conquerors and great builders, have been discovered on the monuments, or on the inscribed cylinders and tablets; but, for the most part, little is recorded of them which is worth repetition. One of the principal of these monarchs was Shalmaneser I., who effected important conquests, and built or enlarged some grand temples and palaces. He reigned from about 1300 to about 1271 B.C. Assyria was now rapidly increasing in power and territorial extent. The sixth and seventh Babylonian dynasties of Berosus are described by that author as consisting of Assyrians, though it is not easy to reconcile the statement with

THE DEATH OF SARDANAPALUS.

known facts. In the first of these two dynasties were forty-five kings, covering a period of five hundred and twenty-six years; in the second, eight kings,' reigning for a hundred and twenty-two years. The earlier dynasty is supposed to have lasted from 1273 B.C. to 747, and the later from 747 to 625. As touching Assyrian history, they are called the Upper and Lower Dynasties; but the annals of these reigns are even now but slightly known. It would appear that under the Chaldæan rule the capital of Assyria was at the ancient city of Asshur, now called Kileh-Sherghat —a town situated on the right or western bank of the Tigris, sixty miles south of Nineveh; and this probably continued to be the case under the earlier of the Assyrian kings. An engraved cylinder has been discovered among the ruins of Kileh-Sherghat, which contains some valuable information. The kings proved to have reigned at this place are fourteen in number, and are thought to have held the sceptre from 1273 B.C. to 930. One of them was Tiglath-Pileser,—"the Tiger Lord of Asshur," for such was the meaning of his name. His era was in the twelfth century before Christ, and by some he is supposed to have been contemporary with Samuel, the Jewish prophet and judge. He was a great warrior, who overran the whole country between Assyria Proper and the Euphrates, subjugated the entire valley of the river from the vicinity of Babylon to the foot of Mount Taurus, conquered Northern Syria, and invaded Media, Armenia, and Cappadocia. In the engraved cylinder found at Kileh-Sherghat, Tiglath-Pileser credits himself with having subdued forty-two countries, "from the channel of the Lower Zab to the Upper Sea of the Setting Sun"—*i.e.*, the Mediterranean. These great achievements were accomplished in the first five years of his reign; but at a later date he suffered defeat at the hands of Merodach-adan-akhi, King of Babylon, who invaded Assyria, and carried off from the temples a number of sacred figures. The Kileh-Sherghat cylinder records the doings of four monarchs immediately preceding Tiglath, the first of whom—the organiser of the distinct Assyrian Empire—bore a name analogous with Ninus. The father of Tiglath is described as having conquered many foreign countries, and "reduced all the lands of the Magian world;" and this career of prosperity was continued by the son until his discomfiture by the Babylonian sovereign.

Among the later kings of the Upper Dynasty, the most remarkable was Asshur-idanni-pal,* whose name has been identified with the Greek Sardanapalus. It was he who transferred the capital of his realm from Kileh-Sherghat to Nimroud, which by some is considered to be the city mentioned in the Bible as Calah; and here he built several of those magnificent edifices, the ruins of which have been discovered by Mr. Layard and others. Many of the most important sculptures now in the British Museum were taken from the remains of the North-west Palace at Nimroud; and Mr. Layard, as already mentioned, regards Nimroud as a quarter of Nineveh itself. In the North-west Palace was discovered an inscription, repeated many hundred times, which sets forth that Asshur-idanni-pal carried his arms far and wide through Western Asia; that he conducted expeditions against Lower Babylonia and Chaldæa; and that he also made his power felt in Syria, and on the coast of the Mediterranean. The kings of the chief Phœnician cities paid him tribute, and Professor Rawlinson thinks that Ethbaal, the father of Jezebel, was one of those who in this way acknowledged his supremacy and purchased his favour. His reign extended from 886 to 858 B.C.

Asshur-idanni-pal was succeeded by his son, Shalmaneser II., who reigned from 858 to 823, and was contemporary with Benhadad and Hazael in Damascus, and with Ahab and Jehu in Israel.† He was a greater conqueror even than his father. He over-ran Cappadocia, Armenia, Azerbijan, a large part of Media Magna, the Kurdish mountains, Babylonia, Mesopotamia, Syria, and Phœnicia. It would seem, however, from our frequently reading of the same countries being subjugated by different monarchs, that these conquests were not permanent, but were a species of warlike inroads, probably for the purpose of exacting tribute, or compelling an acknowledgment of vassalage. Shalmaneser (whose name is sometimes written Shalmanubar) erected a palace and set up an obelisk at Calah, or Nimroud. The obelisk, which was disinterred by Mr. Layard, and is now in the British Museum, is a monument of black basalt, about seven feet high, and two feet wide at the base, exhibiting a few bas-reliefs, and an inscription of two hundred and ten lines. The successor of Shalmaneser II. was his son, Shamas-Iva, or Samsi-Hu, who reigned from 823 to 810 B.C., and who, together with his own son and successor, Iva-Lush III. (supposed to be the Pul of Scripture), carried on the traditions of Assyrian glory. Iva-Lush brings us down to 781. He was a martial sovereign, and the name of his wife (Sammuramit) seems to mark her out as the

* The name is written with considerable variations by different authorities.

† Professor Rawlinson's Manual of Ancient History. 1869.

Semiramis of the Greek legend. Three more reigns —the second and third of which were quiet and undistinguished—concluded the dynasty, which appears to correspond with the sixth of Berosus, and which, as we have seen, is called the Upper Dynasty of Assyria.

The Assyrian Empire was by this time the most potent in Western Asia. The campaigns of Shalmaneser II. in Syria were attended by such brilliant results that the monarch of that country was compelled to declare himself a vassal of his adversary. It seems probable, also, from an inscription on the Black Obelisk, that Shalmaneser rendered his power so formidable to the kings of Israel as to induce Jehu to send him a large tribute of gold and silver, together with articles manufactured in gold. His son, Shamas-Iva, was equally fortunate. In the first place, he put down a great rebellion of his elder brother, who bore the name which the Greeks transformed into Sardanapalus; and he afterwards inflicted a crushing defeat on the King of Babylon, whose composite army, made up of Chaldæans, Elamites, and Syrians, was unable to resist the onslaught of the more northern monarch. During this period of Assyrian history, the civilisation of the country underwent a great expansion. The native architecture and sculpture, though still barbaric, were characterised by much grandeur of thought and execution; literature was cultivated, and the annals of each reign were cut on stone, or impressed on cylinders of *terra-cotta*. Intercourse with other countries, not merely of a warlike character, but also with peaceful objects and results, was frequent; and it is seen from the sculptures that baboons, antelopes, elephants, rhinoceroses, and Bactrian camels, were imported from the more eastern parts of Asia.

The first monarch of the Lower Dynasty of Assyria was Tiglath-Pileser II.—a king whose name is found recorded in the Bible, and who began his reign in 745 B.C. It is believed that he was not of regal family, but an usurper who seized on the throne by means of a revolutionary movement. Whatever his origin, he was undoubtedly a commander of great enterprise and ability. He engaged in campaigns against Upper Mesopotamia, Armenia, and Media, in which he appears to have been successful; and subsequently he attacked Babylonia, Syria, and Israel. His wars with the Israelites, however, will be more particularly described when we come to relate the history of that singular people. Shalmaneser IV., who began to reign in the year 727 B.C., led several expeditions into Palestine, and conquered Phœnicia, with the exception of the island of Tyre, which he unsuccessfully attacked by sea. In 723 B.C., this king laid siege to Samaria (the capital of the kingdom of Israel), but two years later was dispossessed of his crown by an usurper named Sargon. Usurpers are generally men of unusual powers, or special energy of character; and Sargon appears to have been one of the greatest of the Assyrian monarchs. In the inscriptions on the native monuments, his name is spelt Sargina, and a town which he built and called after himself—the city now known as Khorsabad, which abounds in Assyrian ruins—was designated Sarghien by the Arabian geographers.

The reign of Sargon extended over sixteen years —from 721 to 705 B.C.; and during this period the Assyrian monarch conducted many wars. Babylonia and Susiana (Elam) on the south, Media on the east, Armenia and Cappadocia to the north, and Syria, Palestine, Arabia, and Egypt to the west and south-west, felt the weight of his arms. The country of the Philistines was wrested from Egypt, and Merodach-Baladan, King of Babylonia, was defeated and captured, B.C. 709. During the two following years, operations were conducted against the island of Cyprus, which was compelled to submit. The eleven small kingdoms into which that insular territory was divided were left in possession of a nominal independence; but they were forced to pay a yearly tribute, and the Great King, in return, granted them his protection, which probably they would rather have been without. In the reign of Sargon, a Cyprian embassy was received at Babylon, which must at that time have been in the power of the Assyrian monarch. Ten kings of Cyprus contributed by their gifts to the embellishment of Nineveh, and the great city on the Tigris thus received some additional beauty from the hands of artists who may have been in part of Greek descent, and who, doubtless, were not wholly devoid of that artistic genius which belonged to the Hellenic race. The seven kings who formed the embassy to Babylon are described in ancient writings as having offered to Sargon a tribute of gold, silver vases, logs of ebony, and native manufactures; in exchange for which, the Assyrian ruler presented them with a figure of himself in bas-relief, bearing a long inscription in cuneiform characters. From this inscription it appears that the Cypriotes had been awe-struck by the great achievements of the Assyrians in Chaldæa and Syria, and that their hearts had failed them in consequence. Sargon seems to have been fortunate in all his enterprises, and his reign was among the most brilliant in the history of Assyria. During his time, the closeness of his country's intercourse with Egypt resulted in the introduction of an Egyptian manner

into the architecture and other arts of the rival kingdom on the shores of the Tigris.

Sennacherib, the son of Sargon, succeeded to the throne in 705 B.C., and reigned about a quarter of a century. The name of this monarch is familiar to all, because of the frequency with which he is mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures. His first efforts as a sovereign had Babylon for their object. It would seem that although Assyria, for a long period of time, laid claim to the allegiance of the Babylonians, and enforced that claim by repeated expeditions, the supremacy of the Northern Power was never fully acknowledged, and was indeed often successfully defied. When Sennacherib came to the throne, he found Babylonia in full revolt, and entered the country at the head of a large force in order to restore his authority. Merodach-Baladan, who was by this time at liberty again, offered battle to the invader, but was defeated and driven from the land. Sennacherib has recorded in the inscriptions that he utterly razed and destroyed Babylon, so that, if this be true, the city described later on by the Greek writers must have been that which was afterwards built by the Babylonian sovereigns. The old Chaldæan kingdom was thus once more subdued, and in 700 B.C. Sennacherib turned his arms against the cities of Syria, Phœnicia, Philistia, and Idumæa (Edom), the last-named of which countries lay to the south of Judah. These cities, or most of them, were forced to pay tribute, and the Assyrian monarch next swept down on Egypt, took Libnah and Lachish, on the frontier of that kingdom, and afterwards marched against Hezekiah, King of Judah, who had been endeavouring to foment a rebellion among the Philistines, but who was now severely chastised for his attempt. Forty-six walled cities were taken in this expedition, and 200,000 of the Jewish people were carried into captivity. Hezekiah was glad to make his submission, and to buy off the wrath of the conqueror with rich presents, and heavy payments in gold and silver; but he had not learned prudence, and soon afterwards again provoked the power of the Assyrian. A second expedition against Judah terminated disastrously; but the circumstances of its failure must be reserved for another chapter. Sennacherib reached Nineveh without molestation, so far as his personal safety was concerned; but his power had received a serious check. Nevertheless, he engaged in several other wars, directed against Media, Armenia, Susiana (or Elam), and Babylonia. It would seem, therefore, that, as in the case of his predecessors, he was not able to maintain the supremacy he asserted, and that continual incursions into neighbouring territories were required to preserve even the show of sovereignty. In a second expedition to Babylon, which took place in 699 B.C., a little before the unfortunate attack on Judah, the ruling monarch, named Belibus, or Elibus, was deposed, and Assaranadius, or Asordanes, son of Sennacherib, was set up in his place; yet the Great King was once more compelled to operate against the Chaldæan State in the closing years of his reign. Amongst the latest of Sennacherib's achievements was the conquest of Cilicia, when the city of Tarsus was founded, about 685 B.C.

A tragic event brought the life of the Assyrian monarch to a close some five years after. As he was worshipping in the temple of the god Nisroch, his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer slew him, and escaped into Armenia.* The motive for this deed —which Professor Rawlinson assigns to the year 680 B.C.—is not stated, and is indeed very difficult to conjecture, as the assassins did not stay to reap any advantage which might possibly have accrued to them from their act. Neither Adrammelech nor Sharezer succeeded to the Assyrian throne. As far

THE BLACK OBELISK. (*Now in the British Museum.*)

as our knowledge goes, they issue out of vacuity only to perpetrate this abominable crime, and are then swallowed up again in night. Mr. Layard is inclined to identify the god Nisroch with the eagle-headed human figure which is frequently found on early Assyrian monuments, and which is always represented as vanquishing the lion or the bull. The word "Nisr" signifies, in many Semitic languages, an eagle; and one of the eagle-headed

* II. Kings, xix. 37; Isaiah, xxxvii. 38; also II. Chronicles, xxxii. 21.

sculptures now in the British Museum has been regarded as possibly the very image before which Sennacherib was slain. But the whole matter is doubtful, and Sir Henry Rawlinson has even denied that there was any Assyrian god known by the name of Nisroch, which he regards as a corruption, in some manuscripts of the Septuagint, of "Asarak," or "Mesorak." It is worthy of remark that Adrammelech, the name of one of Sennacherib's murderous sons, is also the name of an idol introduced into Samaria by the colonists from Sepharvaim, an Assyrian or Babylonian city.* He represented the active or fecundating power of the sun, and his worship, like that of Moloch, involved the sacrificing of children by fire. One may perhaps be permitted to speculate whether the murder of Sennacherib, while worshipping his own god, by a son who bore the name of another god, does not point to the existence of some religious feud as the cause of the assassination.

Neither the destruction of Sennacherib's army in the later expedition against Egypt and Judah (as related in the Second Book of Kings, chapter xix., verse 35), nor the murder of Sennacherib in the temple, is mentioned in any of the inscriptions hitherto discovered among the ruins of Assyrian cities. It is argued that the court scribes would not be likely to record such misfortunes; but, at any rate, whatever the explanation, the Scriptural narrative is not in these respects supported by the evidence of the monuments, so far as they have yet been examined. What we know with certainty about Sennacherib shows him to have been a prince of mighty power and sumptuous conceptions. It was probably he who finally established the seat of government at Nineveh, and he certainly adorned that city with a number of splendid buildings. The grand palace at Kouyunjik was built by him, and he erected monuments in other countries besides his own. These great works were reared by the labour of captives (including, doubtless, the hosts of Jews whom this monarch transported from their native land), and by the aid of subject kings, who were forced to contribute materials for the several structures. No previous sovereign of Assyria had ever erected a palace on so vast a scale, or with such superb adornments, as that which the princely will of Sennacherib called into being at Kouyunjik; nor was this the only edifice of the kind which the Great King ordained and carried to completion. The empire was prosperous, and commercial relations were carried on with neighbouring lands, bringing wealth into Assyria, and improving the character of native art by comparison with other ideals. Judged by these results, it is impossible to deny that Sennacherib was a grand sovereign; but of course he was a despot after the manner of Eastern kings, and his rule will not bear criticism according to the modern standard of political right. To apply that standard to him exclusively, however, would be unjust and absurd. He does not seem to have been any worse than other monarchs of the ancient world, and his despotism, however cruel in some of its features, may have had good effects also, in fostering a certain type of civilisation, the necessary precursor of other and far superior forms.

The successor to Sennacherib was his son Asshur-akh-iddina, called in the Bible Esar-haddon. The traditions of glory which this prince inherited, he fully sustained, and even increased. After a short, fierce struggle on the part of the Babylonians, headed by the sons of Merodach-Baladan, he obtained undisputed possession of the throne, and pursued that warlike career which distinguished the members of his race. Unlike any of the other Assyrian monarchs, he reigned alternately at Nineveh and Babylon, and at the latter city built himself a palace, as appears by bricks, bearing his name, which have recently been discovered there. Conquests were effected by him in all the Asiatic countries between the Persian Gulf, the Armenian mountains, and the Mediterranean. Carrying his arms into Media, he penetrated farther to the east than any of his predecessors; while, westward of Assyria, he exacted obedience of the Cilicians and the Cypriotes. Syria was compelled to submit; Edom was conquered about 674 B.C.; Central Arabia was invaded in the following year; and all attempts at revolt on the part of subject nationalities were rapidly suppressed. About the year 670, Egypt was invaded by Esar-haddon at the head of an immense army. The king of that country, Tehrak, Tirhakah, or Taracus, was utterly defeated, and Egypt was broken up into a number of petty kingdoms. This war was soon followed by an expedition into Judah. The Jewish king, Manasseh, had revolted, and Esar-haddon determined to reduce him to subjection. This was speedily effected, apparently by some of Esar-haddon's lieutenants, and Manasseh was sent before the Assyrian king at Babylon, but ultimately released, and restored to his throne. A degree of clemency, unusual in those ages, seems to have distinguished the character of Esar-haddon; for, besides his generosity to the King of Judah, he acted munificently towards a son of Merodach-Baladan, the claimant to the Babylonian throne, to whom, after his submission

* II. Kings, xvii. 31.

to the authority of Assyria, he gave a territory on the Persian Gulf.

Esar-haddon was perpetually occupied with great affairs of state. He colonised Samaria with Babylonians, Susianians, and Persians, and he caused the erection of many magnificent edifices. The South-west Palace at Nimroud was built by him, together with another at Nebbi-Yunus, which is described in the Assyrian inscriptions as "the palace of the pleasures of all the year." Altogether, he appears to have erected four palaces in different parts of his dominions, and as many as thirty temples in Assyria and Mesopotamia. In the cuneiform writings he speaks of these buildings with great pride. The temples he refers to as "shining with silver and gold," and he characterises his Nineveh palace as a structure "such as the kings his fathers, who went before him, had never made." The South-west Palace at Nimroud, which Mr. Layard disinterred, corresponds in its general design with the palace of Solomon, described with much particularity in the seventh chapter of the First Book of Kings. The dimensions, however, were larger, and the usual features of an Assyrian regal house were not wanting. Winged bulls, colossal sphinxes, and other sculptures of a historical or mythical nature, gave stateliness to the halls, corridors, and gateways; and it is believed that artists from Syria, Judæa, Phœnicia, and Cyprus, aided in the work of adornment. The bas-reliefs in the palaces of Esar-haddon show less stiffness and conventionality than those which had been executed in earlier reigns—an improvement which may have been due to foreign influences. But unfortunately we have not many remains of the South-west Palace at Nimroud (which was partly constructed of the materials of other palaces) in a perfect and uninjured condition. The building was destroyed by fire previously to being buried, so that much of the material is split and calcined. Still, enough has been preserved to show that Esar-haddon did not boast without reason of his achievements as a builder of gorgeous edifices. The reign of this splendid sovereign is thought to have terminated in 660 B.C.: the date, however, is not known with certainty. His personal rule at Babylon was probably not more than thirteen years in duration; after which time he seems to have re-established the former system of viceregal government. But his reign altogether, taking the whole empire into account, is believed to have been of greater extent. He was followed by his son, Asshur-bani-pal, sometimes called Sardanapalus II.

The greatness of Assyria attained its utmost height under the rule of Asshur-bani-pal. He reconquered Egypt, which had been recovered by Tehrak; received tribute from Gyges, King of Lydia; subjugated the greater part of Armenia; attached Susiana to Babylonia as a subordinate province; and reduced many outlying tribes of Arabs.* The whole of Western Asia was thus united under one rule, and the immense empire of Esar-haddon received still further additions. The most magnificent of the Ninevite palaces was built by him, and he is described as a lover of music and of the arts. Sculpture was greatly improved during this period, and considerable progress was made in ivory-carving, metallurgy, modelling, and other works of utility or beauty. Learned pursuits were encouraged, and the library of Asshur-bani-pal—for such it may in truth be called—shows this monarch in the light of one earnestly desirous of storing up historical knowledge for the information of posterity. The records were in the form of engraved tablets of *terra-cotta*, immense numbers of which have recently been disinterred from the ruins, and partially deciphered. Asshur-bani-pal, however, only enlarged the Royal Library with which his name is associated. The collection was begun at a much earlier period, and the most primitive of the tablets now known to exist date from about the year 1500 B.C. It is no extravagance to speak of these inscriptions as veritable literature. They treat of mythology, grammar, lexicography, mathematics, astronomy, astrology, legends, history, natural history, geography, topography, and law, and even include specimens of wills, conditions of sale and barter, and outlines of legal cases. Some authorities believe that they contain evidence of the existence of bank-notes at that remote period. The library was originally established at Asshur, the modern Kileh-Sherghat; was afterwards removed to Calah (Nimroud); and ultimately, under Sennacherib, found an abiding-place at Nineveh. Although, therefore, Asshur-bani-pal was not the founder of this collection, he did much towards augmenting it. According to a modern inquirer, he added more than all the kings who had preceded him. His agents sought everywhere for inscribed tablets, brought them to Nineveh, and copied them there. Babylon, Borsippa, Cutha, Accad, Ur, Erech, Larsa, Nipur, and other cities, contributed to the literary wealth of the Assyrian capital; and our knowledge of early Babylonian history and mythology has been greatly enriched from this source.†

* Professor Rawlinson's Manual of Ancient History.

† The Chaldæan Account of Genesis, &c., from the Cuneiform Inscriptions. By the late George Smith, of the British Museum. 1876.

The fragments of *terra-cotta* tablets containing the literature of Assyria were found in the rubbish covering the ruins of the South-west and North Palaces at Kouyunjik, which Mr. Layard believes to have been within the limits of Nineveh. The former of these buildings belongs to the age of Sennacherib; the latter, to that of Asshur-bani-pal. It seems probable that the tablets were originally stored in the upper chambers, and, on the destruction of the palaces, fell through to the basement. The broken fragments were found widely scattered in different parts of the same set of ruins; but it is probable that in the ancient days they were arranged according to their topics in the libraries where they were preserved. Subjects were commenced on one tablet, and continued on others of the same size and form: in some cases, the number of tablets forming a book on a single subject amounts to more than a hundred. Thus there were pages and volumes, though it does not appear that the Assyrians had any species of binding, for which, indeed, the material employed was not favourable; but the tablets were numbered, and there were catchwords at the end of every page, which, being repeated at the commencement of the next, still further ensured the continuity of each series. Catalogues of the works have also been found, and the collections were placed under the care of librarians.

TERRA-COTTA TABLETS. (*British Museum.*)

These arrangements seem to have been of great antiquity, and to have existed at Babylon before they were adopted by Assyria. It is conjectured that the Royal Library at Nineveh (which was evidently divided between two buildings) contained upwards of ten thousand inscribed tablets, including almost every subject in ancient literature.* But in all these matters the Assyrians derived their ideas and their information from the more ancient Chaldæans, who probably had a written body of learning long before the capital was fixed at Babylon, and more than two thousand years anterior to the birth of Christ.

The death of Asshur-bani-pal probably occurred about 647 B.C., and the Assyrian Monarchy came to a close with Asshur-emid-ilin, by Greek authors designated Saracus. Under this king, the empire rapidly declined in strength, and the inroad of a vast Scythian horde, from lands north of the Caucasus, inflicted considerable injury on the whole realm. The irruption of barbarians is referred to the year 632 B.C., and appears to have taken place between two attacks by the Medes, the first of which, repulsed by the Assyrians, was in 634, while the second began in 627. The collapse of Assyria was sudden and remarkable. It had in fact been simply a great military dominion, and when, from luxury or some other cause, the military power diminished, extinction was close at hand. The political system of the country was of the rudest and most insufficient kind: there can be little doubt that the mass of the people had no interest in supporting it. Even the genius of the warrior-kings was exhibited rather in the ability to strike temporarily-successful blows than in the power to maintain a permanent rule over conquered provinces. Repeated incursions were made in successive reigns into the same countries; but it was only for a short time that submission could be enforced. The component parts of the empire were but loosely held together, for the science of government was hardly known to the splendid dwellers in the palaces of Nineveh. Cities, and tribes, and nationalities, paid tribute to the Great King, rendered personal homage for their petty thrones, and undertook to give free passage to the Assyrian troops whenever it might be required. But these vassal states do not seem to have furnished contingents to the Assyrian armies, nor was there any military occupation of the conquered lands. They must, consequently, have been a doubtful source of strength at the best of times, while at periods of danger they contributed only an additional peril. Revolts were punished with cruel severity; yet, notwithstanding the deportation of enormous numbers of the subject races, who were forced to work in the construction of public buildings, disaffection continued, and the kingdom was never at rest within itself.

The circumstances attending the fall of Nineveh and the destruction of the Assyrian Empire are not fully known; but it is certain that the Medes,

* Smith's Chaldæan Account of Genesis, &c.

THE PALACE OF KOUYUNJIK, RESTORED. (*After Layard.*)

Babylonians, and Chaldæans united their forces against the Power which had so often oppressed them. The country of the Medes was situated to the east of Assyria, beyond the range of Mount Zagros. It had been frequently subjugated by the monarchs of Nineveh, and Sargon had sent thither large bodies of Israelites, who mingled with the native Aryan race. But in the time of Saracus the Medes had become strong and self-reliant, and they organized an expedition against the kingdom which more than any other threatened their national existence. Abydenus, a Greek writer who professes to follow Berosus, relates that Saracus, alarmed by the news of forces advancing against him from the direction of the sea (which forces probably consisted of Chaldæans, aided by the people of Susiana), sent Nabopolassar to assume the command at Babylon. The person so entrusted took the opportunity to rebel, and formed an alliance with the King of Media, who is called Astyages by Abydenus, and also by Polyhistor, but who seems to have been Cyaxares. Together with the Babylonians and Chaldæans (who, in the general confusion of those times, must be regarded as distinct communities), the Medes invaded Assyria, defeated the armies of the Great King, and laid siege to Nineveh. Saracus defended his capital with great courage for the space of two years, but at length, seeing that the city would inevitably be taken, set fire to his palace, like the Sardanapalus of the Greek legends, and consumed himself, his wives, and his treasures, in one vast funeral pyre.

This event occurred about 625 B.C., and it proved the entire destruction of the Assyrian Empire. The leading facts are mentioned by several ancient writers, and briefly alluded to in the Bible; but the former are not agreed as to some of the details, and the latter is concerned with prophecy rather than with historic relation. The downfall of Assyria is foreshadowed in Isaiah (chapters x. and xiv.), and the destruction of the city of Nineveh occupies, by anticipation, a prominent place in the Books of Nahum and Zephaniah; but the exact date of these predictions cannot be determined. The capture of Nineveh is said by Ctesias to have been facilitated by a great overflow of the Tigris, which swept away part of the external walls, and effected a breach, through which the besiegers entered on the subsiding of the waters. This circumstance is supposed to have been foreshown by Nahum when he says (i. 8), "With an overrunning flood, he [Jehovah] will make an utter end of the place;" and again in the sixth verse of the second chapter:—"The gates of the rivers shall be opened, and the palace shall be dissolved." But the fact itself is doubtful; for, while there is abundant evidence in the ruins that Nineveh was devasted by fire, no sign has been discovered of the action of water. Nahum, however, alludes to the agency of fire also; and the expression (chapter i., verse 10), "For while they be folden together as thorns, and while they are drunken as drunkards, they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry," is believed to be confirmed by the statement in Diodorus Siculus, that the last assault was made when the defenders were overcome with wine.

In the foregoing sketch of Assyrian history, the authorities chiefly followed have been Professor Rawlinson and his brother, General Sir Henry Rawlinson, whose researches in this field, aided by the discoveries of Sir Austen Henry Layard and others, have conferred the greatest services on the student of antiquity. But some valuable contributions to the same stock of knowledge have also been made by a still more recent inquirer—the late Mr. George Smith, who devoted much time and labour to the interpretation of the cuneiform inscriptions in the British Museum, and who conducted explorations in the old Assyrian land from 1873 to 1876, when he prematurely died. In the opinion of Mr. Smith, the existence of Assyria as an independent kingdom goes back to a much earlier period than has been generally supposed, even by modern scholars. He calls the first king Ismi-dagan, and fixes his reign from 1850 to 1820 B.C. In other respects, also, Mr. Smith is at issue with his fellow-inquirers in regard to dates, though sometimes only to the extent of a few years; but, as his own figures are admittedly conjectural and approximate, it is possible that they may not be definitively confirmed. He speaks of four early monarchs, one of whom—Vulnirari I.—reigned in 1320 B.C. This sovereign appears to have been a ruler of great power and acknowledged supremacy. After a prosperous reign, Vulnirari left his crown to his son, Shalmaneser I., about 1300 B.C., who in turn was succeeded by his own son, Tugulti-ninip. Of the latter it is recorded that he conquered the Babylonians, and put an end to the race of Arabian kings who, as we read in Berosus, had reigned in Babylonia for two hundred and forty-five years.

Nineveh, according to Mr. George Smith, was founded by the Babylonian king, Nimrod, and during the reigns of his successors the city was adorned with a temple to Ishtar, daughter of the god Hea. In the nineteenth century before Christ, Assyria was constituted into a monarchy, under rulers whose capital was the city of Assur, or Asshur, now Kileh-Sherghat; and one of these rulers, named Samsi-vul, restored the old temple of Ishtar at

Nineveh. For some centuries, nothing more is heard of this city; but Assur-ubalid,* who reigned B.C. 1400, once more restored the temple that in primitive ages had been dedicated to the daughter of Hea. His son, Tugulti-ninip (1271 B.C.), and his successors, added to the grandeur of Nineveh; but towards the close of the reign of Shalmaneser II. (885—860) the Ninevites were offended by the transfer of the government to Calah (Nimroud), and they accordingly revolted in favour of the king's son, Assur-dain-pal. This attempt at revolution was suppressed by Samsi-vul, brother of the insurgent prince, and in 825 B.C. Samsi-vul himself (the fourth of that name) succeeded to the crown. After the death of Tiglath-Pileser II. (who ascended the throne in 745 B.C., and died in 727), Nineveh was to some extent neglected in favour of a new royal city, built by Sargon, in the year 722 B.C., at Dur-sargina (Khorsabad); but Sennacherib, who came to the throne in 705 B.C., restored the glories of the former capital. This powerful and magnificent prince erected two splendid palaces, built the great walls of the city, and turned the course of the river Khosr, so as to make it flow more to the south. Esar-haddon succeeded in 681, according to Mr. Smith; and his son and successor, Assurbanipal, added to the splendours of the regal city. "Nineveh," says the authority we are at present following, "was now in the height of its glory; but these vast works had been raised in great part by slave-labour, and the captives taken in war toiled in building her walls and palaces. The city saw triumph after triumph, until, in the time of Assur-banipal, it ruled over an empire stretching from Egypt and Lydia on the west to Media and Persia on the east."† Between Assurbanipal and the last of the Assyrian kings, Mr. Smith interposes a monarch called Bel-zakir-iskun, reigning from 626 to 620 B.C.; but very little is known about him. The fall of Nineveh occurred, according to this authority, in 607 B.C.

An engraved cylinder containing Assurbanipal's account of his own achievements as a warrior, which has been interpreted by Mr. Smith, shows that the monarch was not, as even recent historians have supposed, an unwarlike and somewhat effeminate sovereign. In a pompous Oriental style, the king relates the history of Assyria from his accession down to about the year 645 B.C. Nine campaigns are in this way chronicled: the first and second against Egypt; the third against Tyre; the fourth against Minni, in the mountains east of Assyria; the fifth against Elam, or Susiana; the sixth against Babylon; the seventh and eighth against Elam; and the ninth against Arabia. Assurbanipal was a great and successful commander, and the Assyrian power was never more dominant than under his rule. How, in two more reigns, extending apparently over not more than nineteen years, the military strength of the kingdom can have so entirely collapsed, is a mystery which neither ancient traditions, nor the results of modern inquiry, suffice to explain. The probability is that the state was overburdened by its extraneous possessions, and that the dependencies, educated by a series of defeats in the art of war, were at length enabled to crush their oppressors. A powerful combination mastered the legions of the Great King; and with the capture of Nineveh the empire split into fragments, and vanished from the list of sovereignties.

All knowledge of the site of Nineveh had been lost by the time of Herodotus, who lived only two centuries after the destruction of the magnificent Assyrian Empire. In the fourth century B.C., the armies of Alexander the Great marched over the buried ruins of the city, without, apparently, being aware that the bones of an extinct dominion lay beneath their tread. Strabo says that Nineveh fell into decay immediately after the dissolution of the Assyrian Monarchy by the Medes; but during the Roman period a small castle or fortified town stood on some portion of the ground, and it appears to have been called Nineve, Ninos, or Ninus. This in turn was abandoned, and nothing of it seems to have remained when the Emperor Heraclius defeated the Persians, on the very site of the ancient city, in the year 627 A.C. In the twelfth century of our era, Benjamin of Tudela mentioned the site of Nineveh as occupied by numerous inhabited villages and small townships. Throughout the Middle Ages, as in the classical times, traditions of the old Imperial city, vaguely perpetuating the memory of its stupendous size and almost fabulous grandeur, continued to haunt the countries of Western Asia; but, although it was believed that the Assyrian capital lay on the eastern bank of the Tigris, the precise spot was unknown until the discoveries of M. Botta and Mr. Layard.

With the fall of Nineveh, the distinct nationality of the Assyrians came to a close. About a century after the death of Saracus, the people attempted, in conjunction with the Medes and Armenians, to throw off the yoke which had been imposed on them, first by the Medes themselves, and afterwards by the Persians; but, the enterprise failing, the Assyrians

* It is to be observed that the name which most other authors write "Asshur," Mr. George Smith spelt "Assur."

† Assyrian Discoveries, by George Smith. 1875.

thenceforth accepted their lot with resignation. Under the Persian Empire, they were included in the satrapy of Babylon, and paid a yearly tribute of a thousand talents of silver to the king. They also contributed levies to the Persian army, and are known to have fought at Thermopylæ, Cunaxa, Issus, and Arbela; but as soldiers they do not appear to have been highly valued by their masters. At the present day, this remarkable race is thought to be represented by the Nestorian tribes inhabiting the mountains of Kurdistan, the plains round the lake of Urumiyah in Persia, and a few villages in the neighbourhood of Mosul, opposite the site of Nineveh. These tribes still speak a Semitic dialect, described by Mr. Layard* as almost identical with the Chaldee of the Books of Daniel and Ezra; and their personal appearance bears a certain resemblance to that of the kings, priests, and warriors, depicted in the ancient Assyrian sculptures and paintings. The Nestorians, however, are sometimes held to be of Jewish origin. Kurdistan corresponds to some extent with the Assyria Proper of former times. It is a province belonging in the main to Asiatic Turkey, and in the vicinity of the Ninevite ruins exhibits a striking spectacle of desolation and neglect.

In many respects, the civilisation of the Assyrians had attained a very high level. A sumptuous and majestic order of architecture is observable in the ruins of their regal edifices. Their sculpture, in its later developments, showed striking characteristics of vitality and power. Their painting, though at fault in some of the highest qualities of the art, had yet a certain element of Oriental splendour, which redeemed it from insignificance. They were acquainted with the mode of building tunnels, aqueducts, and drains. Glass was known to them, and they were not ignorant of the lens. Inlaying, enamelling, and ornamental work in metals, were arts which they habitually practised. Their pottery was excellent, and they worked in bronze, in ivory, and in gems. The commerce of Assyria was considerable. In the eighth and seventh centuries B.C. (by which time Sidon and Tyre had been degraded from their pre-eminence), the trade of Nineveh reached from India in the east to the Scilly Islands in the west. The legal system of the kingdom was very elaborate, and in many respects similar to that of modern nations. Its leading principles seem to have been in accordance with reason and justice, and great pains were taken to preserve them by official reports of remarkable cases, inscribed on clay tablets.

Yet, as regards its political condition, the Assyrian State had all the vices of an Eastern tyranny. The people were slaves to the will or the caprice of their sovereign, and there was not even the check of a territorial aristocracy on the supreme despotism of of the king. To the power of the monarch was added the dictation of the priest. The regal system of Assyria was closely associated with religion, and the religion of the country was enforced, sometimes by cruel persecutions, on the subjugated races. In one of the inscriptions, Tiglath-Pileser boasts of having crucified certain Chaldæans who had refused to worship his gods. Other nations were doubtless treated after the same fashion, and it has been suggested that the idolatry of the Jewish king, Ahaz, was due to the compulsion of Tiglath-Pileser, rather than to any natural inclination on his own part. The religion thus imposed on weaker nations was a form of polytheism, including the worship of thirteen principal divinities, of which the chief was Asshur, the tutelary patriarch of the nation. When to these are added the minor deities of the Assyrian Pantheon, the number altogether amounts to some thousands. Each of the gods and goddesses had many names, and some possessed fifty titles in addition. Several have been identified with the chief divinities of the later Greek system; others were the guardian genii of the sun, moon, and stars, for in many respects, though not in all, the religion of Assyria showed an affinity with that of Babylon. That the Assyrians were sincerely devout in their belief, such as it was, is evident from passages in the inscriptions, where we find the monarchs attributing their frequent and brilliant successes in warfare to their acknowledgment of the true gods, and the numerous reverses of their enemies—the Egyptians, Elamites, Babylonians, Arabians, and others—to a preference for false religions. But the Assyrian faith was a system of gross idolatry and barbarism, and the political system of the country, being founded on nothing but force, succumbed to force at last. The monarchy of Asshur passes over the stage of history like a gorgeous but cruel pageant; and when its appointed time has come, it sinks into sudden darkness and oblivion, without leaving one generous or ennobling memory for the admiration of succeeding times.

* Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, Art. "Nineveh."

BABYLONIAN ORNAMENT.* (*British Museum.*)

CHAPTER IV.

THE BABYLONIANS AND THE HITTITES.

Later History of Babylonia—Reign of Nabopolassar—Succession of Nebuchadnezzar, and Events of his Reign—Death of Nebuchadnezzar—Evil Merodach; Neriglissar; Laborosoarchod; Nabonidus—Attack of Cyrus, the Persian on Babylonia—Siege of Babylon, and Death of Belshazzar—The Question of "Darius the Mede"—Babylonia absorbed in the Persian Empire—Subsequent History of the Province—Decay and Extinction of the City of Babylon—History of the Hittite Dominion—Influence of the Hittite City of Carchemish on the Civilisation of Asia Minor and Greece—Characteristics of Early History: the Hamitic and Semitic Races—The Division between the West and the East.

For a period of six hundred and forty-eight years—that is, from 1273 to 625 B.C.—the fortunes of Babylonia and Assyria were so closely associated that their history is to a great extent commingled. It was in 1273 that the Assyrians, under Shalmaneser I., acquired a predominance over the old Chaldæan Monarchy; and it was not until the fall of Nineveh, in 625, that that predominance was finally shaken off. But in the meanwhile, as we have seen, the submission of the Babylonians was extremely precarious, and from time to time was openly refused. The power of the Assyrian kings, however, was not to be lightly defied, and renewed expeditions into the country led to fresh subjection. A happier day for Babylon arose with Nabonassar, who, after in the first instance occupying the position of a feudatory to the Assyrian king, asserted and maintained his entire independence of the northern sovereignty. His reign extended from 747 to 733 B.C., and during those fourteen years he destroyed the records of his predecessors, in order, it is said, to compel the Babylonians to date from himself. Nabonassar was followed by other monarchs, who resisted the claim of Assyria with some degree of success, but were often severely handled, and sometimes deposed, by the mightier sovereigns on the banks of the Tigris. From 699 to 693 B.C., Assaranadius, a son of Sennacherib, ruled at Babylon. An age of revolt, disturbance, and anarchy next ensued; no king reigned so long as a year; and it would be difficult to say whether the country was in a state of independence or of vassalage. When, however, Esar-haddon ascended the throne of Assyria, about 680 B.C., Babylonia was once more completely subdued; and this state continued until the revolt of Nabopolassar, who, in conjunction with Cyaxares, brought the Assyrian Empire to a close.

The conquered territory was divided between the victors. Assyria Proper fell to the share of Cyaxares, while Nabopolassar obtained Susiana, the Euphrates valley, Syria, Phœnicia, and Palestine. It is from this period that we are to date the commencement of the eighth and last dynasty of Berosus, which he describes as consisting of six Chaldæan sovereigns, reigning for a space of eighty-seven years. The kings of the house of Nabopolassar were undoubtedly Chaldæans, as appears by their names; and thus the old Hamite or Turanian race was restored to power in the ancient seat of its dominion. The fortunes of the new dynasty were brilliant, but short-lived. All along the lower course of the Euphrates, and even to the confines of Egypt, the Babylonians held undisputed sway. But on the north and east they were threatened by the wider empire of the Medes; and another power was also growing up beyond the Tigris—the power of Persia—which was soon to bring destruction upon Babylon itself. At first, however, it might well have seemed that a long career of prosperity and glory lay before the restored kingdom of the Chaldæans. Nabopolassar was enabled, during a reign of twenty-one years, reaching from 625 to 604 B.C., to consolidate and

* Embroidery on the robe of a king, sculptured on a stone, which also contains the record of the sale of a field. Probably in the reign of Merodach-Nadin-Akhi, king of Babylon, about B.C. 1120.

organise his kingdom, and to commence a number of grand buildings which were afterwards completed by Nebuchadnezzar. He likewise took part, as the ally of Media, in a war between Cyaxares and the Lydian king, Alyattes; and it was owing to the mediation of Babylon that peace was concluded in 610 B.C. Subsequently to this, Nabopolassar was engaged in hostilities with Egypt. Necho, the king of that country, who had ascended the throne in 610, was desirous of securing his dominions against the menace of Babylonian power; and having, by a rapid march, taken Carchemish, on the Euphrates, about 608 B.C., he set up at Jerusalem a monarch who was simply his representative. The whole extent of country between Egypt and the Euphrates was soon in his possession; but he was not permitted to remain there in peace. Nabopolassar was now too old to take the field in person, and accordingly despatched his son, Nebuchadnezzar (or Nabuchodonosor), at the head of a large army, to expel the intruder. This was speedily effected. In the years 605 and 604 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar defeated Necho in a great battle before Carchemish, recovered Cœle-Syria, Phœnicia, and Palestine, took Jerusalem, and was conducting operations against Egypt itself, when intelligence reached him that his father was dead, and he hastily returned to Babylon.

THE BATTLE OF CARCHEMISH.

It was not without some alarm as to the succession, which in his absence from the capital might have been disputed, that Nebuchadnezzar set his face towards the east. Accompanied only by his light troops, though followed at a later period by large bodies of captives, who were dispersed throughout Babylonia, he crossed the desert of Syria, and reached the Imperial city in time to prevent any outbreak of disaffection. It is to this monarch that most of the grand works of later Babylon are to be attributed. He strengthened, enlarged, and adorned the city, and in all parts of his territory constructed reservoirs, canals, aqueducts, embankments, and breakwaters, which added considerably to the resources and prosperity of the land. Many towns of the empire were rebuilt and augmented, and Babylonia became the most illustrious example of the civilisation of that age. These great designs were carried out in the midst of frequent wars, or, at the best, during occasional intervals of peace. The conflicts of Nebuchadnezzar with the Jews will be more fitly related in another chapter: let it here suffice to say that in all his operations, whether against Jerusalem, Syria, Phœnicia, Edom, or Egypt, he was completely successful. His empire extended from the Caucasian mountains to the African desert; and the power which he wielded, though undoubtedly the power of a despot, was qualified on some occasions by a spirit of clemency. The relations of this monarch with the Jewish prophet Daniel, it would be superfluous to repeat, since they are well known to all readers of the Bible. Beyond the testimony of the Hebrew writings, and the later Jewish traditions, there is no record with respect to those events; and it is very doubtful

whether the Babylonian inscriptions of this reign make any allusion to the strange form of madness —a species of lycanthropy—which, as Daniel tells us, overtook Nebuchadnezzar as a punishment for his pride. The king refers, indeed, to a temporary suspension of his great works; but the passage is ambiguous, and it does not appear that any precise reason is given for the break. Nebuchadnezzar died in 561 B.C., after an unusually long reign of forty-three years.

The next occupant of the throne was the son of Nebuchadnezzar, Evil-Merodach, of whom we read in the Second Book of Kings (chapter xxv.) that

ANCIENT BABYLON.

he acted with great kindness to the captive Jewish sovereign, Jehoiachin, setting him at liberty, and showing him peculiar honour. Nevertheless, it is recorded of Evil-Merodach that he was a bad king to his subjects, and, after a short reign of only two years, he was murdered by his brother-in-law, Neriglissar, who succeeded in 559 B.C. Considerable obscurity surrounds this ruler; but it would appear that he too governed only a short time, and, dying in 556, left the crown to his son, a youth named Laborosoarchod, who, after a reign of nine months, was seized by conspirators, and tortured to death. One of the conspirators, called Nabonidus, or Labynetus, succeeded to the royal office in the year 555 B.C. This prince seems to have been of priestly rather than regal family, but did not on that account neglect considerations of state and warlike policy. In the contest between Cyrus and Crœsus, which we shall have to relate further on, he entered into alliance with the latter against the former, and was preparing to send a contingent into Asia Minor, when the cessation of the war, in 554 or 553 B.C., put an end to his designs. The victorious Cyrus cherished the memory of Nabonidus's partisanship against himself, and determined to be revenged. Yet he suffered nearly fifteen years to elapse before commencing any hostile action; and, in the meanwhile, Nabonidus, who probably feared the ultimate results of his unfortunate alliance, added materially to the defences of Babylon. Berosus states that Nebuchadnezzar had already taken measures that none who should in after times besiege the capital should be able to divert the river, so as to facilitate an entrance; and this was accomplished by making three walls about the inner city, and three about the outer. Some of these walls were built of burnt brick and bitumen, others of brick only; and the defences thus constructed were increased by Nabonidus. All these precautions, however, were in vain. The might of Cyrus the Persian was greater than that of any contemporary prince, and Babylon was doomed.

The attack at length came, towards the close of 539 B.C. At the head of an enormous army, consisting of war-hardened veterans, Cyrus advanced against Babylonia, but delayed active operations until the following spring. Nabonidus had shortly before divided the government of the kingdom with his son Belshazzar (or, more correctly, Bel-shar-ezar), whom he left within the fortified capital, while he himself took the field in person. This fact, which

appears in the Babylonian inscriptions, accounts for Daniel's allusion to Belshazzar as the monarch who was ruling in Babylon itself at the time the city was captured. Joining battle with Cyrus early in 538, Nabonidus was defeated, and forced to shut himself up in the neighbouring town of Borsippa, on the site of which the ruins of the Temple of Nebo, now called the Birs Nimroud, are still visible. In the intoxication of his victory, Cyrus advanced on Babylon, and prepared to take it by assault. Belshazzar did not dare to issue forth against the enemy, but trusted to the strength of his external walls, which, according to Herodotus, were more than three hundred feet high, and nearly eighty-five feet thick, forming a square of about fourteen miles each way. Within these fortifications he had stored up food for several years, and it seemed, therefore, not unlikely that the assault would be repelled. The soldiers remained in their strongholds, and the citizens gave themselves up to a false security. It is probable that an insufficient watch was maintained by the defenders of the great metropolis, and a spirit of mad enjoyment appears to have seized upon the whole community. Cyrus, meanwhile, was pursuing his plans with quiet determination. He diverted the waters of the Euphrates from their ancient channel—a piece of strategy which Nebuchadnezzar thought he had rendered impossible—and then marched along the bed into the city. The gates opening on the river would seem to have been left unclosed by the carelessness of the people. When the entry was made, Belshazzar was sitting at a great feast which he had given to his courtiers; the populace also were engaged in revelry; and a general massacre ensued when the assailants suddenly burst into their midst. In the confusion of that dreadful night, Belshazzar was slain, and Cyrus established his power in the seat of the Chaldæan dominion. It is stated that, owing to the enormous size of the city, the news of its having been captured was not known in the farther parts even on the third day after;* but this is very difficult of belief. Every one will remember the story, related in the Book of Daniel, of the miraculous handwriting on the wall of the royal palace, which immediately preceded the fall of the city.†

According to Daniel (v. 31), Belshazzar was succeeded by Darius the Mede. No allusion whatever is made to Cyrus the Persian in connection with the siege; nor is it distinctly stated that there was any siege at all, or that Belshazzar was slain as the consequence of military operations against the place. A little further on (vi. 28), Daniel alludes to Cyrus as the successor of Darius; but we have no certain evidence that Darius the Mede had anything to do with the capture of the city and the government of Babylonia, nor are we able to identify him with any historical personage. Several learned attempts have been made to reconcile these discrepancies, but they rest only on conjecture, and are far from satisfactory. The most plausible is that, after Babylon had been taken by Cyrus, Darius the Mede—who, according to this view, is identified with Astyages, the last king of Media, and the maternal grandfather of Cyrus himself—was made viceroy over the Chaldæan realm. Of this, however, there is no proof; indeed, Daniel does not allude to Darius as a satrap, but very precisely, and in several places, as an independent monarch, who had his own viceroys, to the number of a hundred and twenty princes, to rule over the various parts of his kingdom. The question is lost in a dense obscurity, which the utmost efforts of scholarship have been unable to dissipate; but that Cyrus was the conqueror of Babylon seems probable from the testimony of several ancient authors, including that of Berosus the Chaldæan, who compiled his records from archives in the temple of the god Belus at Babylon, where he officiated as priest. This is the view now generally accepted as historical.

It seems not impossible that the Darius alluded

* Aristotle's "Politics," Book III., chap. 2.

† Some account of a cuneiform tablet relating to the capture of Babylon by Cyrus, and the events which led up to it, was given at a meeting of the Society of Biblical Archæology, held on March 2, 1880. This narrative is very different from that which is usually accepted. A paper read before the Society informs us that "in the ninth year of the reign of Nabonidus, Cyrus crossed the Tigris below Arbela; but the text is too mutilated to instruct us as to the occasion and details of the war. The record of the tenth year also is very fragmentary. From this year nothing of the text is preserved until the seventeenth and last year of Nabonidus, when the record, save at the beginning, becomes comparatively copious. Mention is made of a revolt of the people of the 'Lower Sea,' or Mediterranean; and this is evidently the beginning of the end. In vain the king (who had previously paid little regard to religion) begins to think of his neglected gods and festivals. In the month Tammuz, Cyrus is at Rutum, some distance to the south of Babylon. Already, on his marching into Accad, its people had revolted against Nabonidus, and on the 14th of that month Sipar had been taken without fighting. Nabonidus fled, and was captured by Gobryas two days afterwards, when the latter entered Babylon unresisted. On the 3rd of Marchesvan, Cyrus himself arrived there, proclaimed peace to the city, and appointed Gobryas and others governors over it. On the 11th of the month, Nabonidus died in Accad, whose people were allowed by Cyrus to mourn for him six days. Meanwhile, the conqueror and his son Cambyses conciliated their new subjects by honouring the Babylonian gods. Belshazzar is not named; and even if he be the anonymous son of the king, there is no record of his death on the day of Babylon's fall. Nor is there any hint of the city's having been entered by the dried-up bed of the Euphrates."

to in the Book of Daniel may have been Darius Hystaspes, King of Persia in the sixth century; but in that case it is not easy to explain the phrase, "Darius the Median," or the fact of Belshazzar reigning in Babylon, or the reference to Cyrus as a successor to Darius.

When news of the capture of Babylon was conveyed to Nabonidus at Borsippa, he perceived that any further attempt to save the kingdom would be hopeless. He therefore sent in his submission to Cyrus, who treated the fallen monarch with great magnanimity, and gave him a principality in Carmania (a country between Persia and India), where he ended his days in peace. On the capture of the great city, the whole of Babylonia became a province of the Persian Empire; but Babylon itself was not much degraded from its former rank. The Persian kings resided there during a considerable portion of the year, and the place was reckoned the chief city of the realm, after Susa and Ecbatana. Nevertheless, the fortifications were to some extent demolished, and the people were jealously watched. They did not readily accept their subjection, and several times attempted to throw off the rule of the Persians: twice in the reign of Darius Hystaspes, in the sixth century B.C., and once in that of Xerxes, in the following century. On the first of these occasions, two important battles were fought; on all three, the city was besieged and captured. The actions under Darius are recorded by that monarch in the Behistun Inscription; the siege by Xerxes is mentioned by Ctesias. Even in the time of Darius, the prosperity of Babylonia and Assyria was such that the two provinces together were able to pay Persia a yearly tribute of a thousand talents, or upwards of £280,000. Seventy years later than this, when Herodotus visited the country, it was capable of supporting the King of Persia, his numerous followers, and his whole army, for four months in every year; and at the same time it sustained eight hundred stallions and sixteen thousand mares for the existing satrap, whose Indian dogs were supplied with food by four considerable towns, in lieu of all other taxes.*

After each rebellion of the Babylonians, the defences were still further destroyed; subsequently to the reign of Xerxes they were suffered to go completely to decay. The public edifices were also much neglected, and Xerxes carried away the golden statue of the god Belus; yet, when the city gave admission to Alexander the Great, that conqueror regarded it as not unworthy to be the capital of the world. The Temple of Belus, however, was then in so ruinous a condition that, according to Strabo, it would have required the labour of ten thousand men for two months even to clear away the rubbish which had collected about it. The lofty and superb mind of Alexander was captivated by the ancient magnificence and traditional glories of Babylon; and he determined to restore the Temple, to give new splendour to this venerable seat of empire, and to rule his vast possessions from the banks of the Euphrates. It was in the palace of Nebuchadnezzar, at Babylon, that Alexander died, and his premature decease prevented the realisation of his plans. Under the Seleucidæ, the capital of the Asiatic Greeks was fixed at Antioch, and afterwards at Seleucia, which, built out of materials derived from Babylon, was largely peopled by inhabitants from the older city. A few of the ancient Chaldæan families, members of the priesthood, still remained to conduct the services of the temples; but the enormous metropolis soon fell into the most melancholy of all wastes—a waste of ruined buildings, the desolated habitations of men. The mighty bulk of its architecture crumbled into heaps of shattered bricks; palaces and temples followed, only more slowly, the wreck of private edifices; and the vast interspaces of masonry became in time the caverns of wild creatures, which, fleeing from the outer desert, sought covert in the homes of kings, and beneath the altars of forgotten gods.

Ere Babylon had reached its utmost desolation, it underwent a partial recovery in the fourth century before Christ; and when Demetrius Poliorcetes besieged it in 311 B.C., two fortresses still remained, one of which the Greek commander was unable to take. In the year 127 B.C., a Parthian sovereign sent numerous Babylonian families as slaves into Media, and, setting fire to several parts of the city which still remained, reduced it to a condition of abject wretchedness. A few generations later, it was inhabited only by certain Jews, who found a mournful refuge among ruins which they shared with the jackal and the owl. In the early Christian times, the site of Babylon was nothing better than a marsh. This condition of the soil was owing to the entire neglect of the system of irrigation on which Babylonia depended for its fertility. The canals in connection with the Euphrates had long been filled up, or become choked with the neglected deposits of ages; and the water, spreading idly over the surface of the ground, produced malarious fens, fatal to every species of healthy vegetation. The largest of these canals, which connected the two great rivers of Mesopotamia, was opened again by the Roman

* Herodotus, I. 192.

Emperors Trajan and Severus, and Julian's fleet passed through it from the Euphrates into the Tigris; but the decay of Babylonia could not be arrested. Scorpions and serpents infested the remains of Nebuchadnezzar's palace when Benjamin of Tudela visited the country in the twelfth Christian century; and in still later ages the very site of the proud city was a matter of doubtful speculation, of which the natives of the Mesopotamian plain knew as little as the visitors from distant lands.

While the great monarchies of Chaldæa, Assyria, and Babylonia pursued their course, the destinies of Western Asia were also affected by another powerful dominion, of which we have heard but little until recently. This was the Empire of the Hittites, which appears to have occupied a very important position in primitive times. We read of the Hittites in various parts of the Bible, but chiefly as a small commercial tribe, dwelling in the Land of Canaan and the borders of Syria. Ephron, of whom Abraham purchased the field and cave wherein he buried his wife Sarah, was a Hittite. The name of the tribe at that time was Bene-Cheth, "the Children of Heth;" and as Heth was a son of Canaan, the Hittites were a Hamite race. They seem ultimately to have established a powerful confederacy in the valley of the Orontes, to the north of Phœnicia, and to have acquired possession of Carchemish, situated on the Euphrates, very near the site of the later city called by the Greeks Hierapolis. On the Orontes, their principal city was Kedesh, which bore a peculiarly sacred character, and the situation of which enabled its possessors to give the kings of Egypt considerable trouble in their expeditions into Asia. The acquisition, at a later period, of the city of Carchemish conferred on this nation the mastery of all Syria, from the borders of Damascus to a point on the Euphrates marked by the town of Bir. The predominance of the Hittites at Carchemish lasted from about 1100 to 717 B.C., and they contended with Assyria itself.

We will now give a detailed account of the fortunes of this remarkable confederation. In the fourteenth century before the Christian era, the reigning King of Egypt, Seti I., or Sethos, was obliged to take up arms against a formidable league of Syrian and Canaanitish tribes, under the leadership of the Hittites; and although the arms of the Egyptians triumphed, as they had done before, the danger was removed only for a time. Early in the thirteenth century, Rameses II., King of Egypt, was attacked by a powerful combination of Asiatic races, all of whom acknowledged the supremacy of the Hittite sovereign. The tribes of Mesopotamia, of Western Armenia, and of Asia Minor, gathered under the flag of this potentate, and a prolonged and desperate war ensued. The Egyptian poet, Pentaur, who lived at the time, has described the incidents of the war in grandiloquent verse, mingling with his facts, however, a large amount of purely mythical adornment. It was chiefly round the walls of Kedesh that the desperate struggle was maintained, and for some time the issue seemed doubtful; but at length the Hittites, finding themselves exhausted, were glad to conclude an offensive and defensive alliance with the Egyptians. The war had lasted seventeen years, and Rameses was as much in need of peace as his opponents. By the treaty thus negotiated, each monarch promised to come to the other's assistance in case of attack, and to deliver up all political offenders or ordinary criminals who might have fled from the one country to the other. This engagement (which is curious as an early instance of an extradition treaty) endured for a century, after which the Hittites and the Egyptians were again at strife. About the year 1280 B.C., Rameses III. made an attack on Carchemish and other Hittite towns, and returned to his own country laden with spoil and prisoners. The strength of the Hittites was now much reduced. There was no longer any central authority; each of the chief cities was ruled by an independent prince, and the military power was dissipated by division. Kedesh had been taken by the Syrians, and Carchemish became the great centre of the Hittite dominion. These enterprising tribes were therefore compelled to look north, rather than south, for any extension of their sway. This brought them into collision with Assyria, and for a while it was doubtful whether they would not seriously hinder the growth of that monarchy, as they had now recovered both their cohesion and their power. When Tiglath-Pileser I. occupied the throne of Asshur, the Hittites ruled without dispute from the Euphrates to the Lebanon, and from the northern borders of Phœnicia to the Euxine. Cappadocia was tributary to the King of Carchemish, and furnished him with troops; but, as the might of Assyria increased, that of the Hittites declined. In particular, Asshur-idanni-pal, and his successor, Shalmaneser II., inflicted upon them a series of defeats, captured several of their cities, deprived them of one of their most commanding positions on the Euphrates, and exacted from the citizens of Carchemish a heavy tribute in gold, bronze, lead,

precious stones, and costly stuffs. Finally, the Hittites were fiercely assailed by Sargon, who succeeded to the Assyrian crown in 721 B.C. Pisiris, the last of their monarchs, was defeated and slain in 717, and his territory became a province of the Great King's dominions. But Carchemish itself continued to be an important seat of commerce, and merchants from all parts of the world met there for the interchange of their commodities. The city is thought to have been taken by Pharaoh-Necho, about 608 B.C., seventeen years after the destruction of the Assyrian Empire; but in 605 it was captured by Nebuchadnezzar, and added to the Babylonian sovereignty. This was the close of its distinctive annals.

The signification of the name Carchemish appears to have been "the fort of Chemosh," and Chemosh was the name of a Moabite deity, who was worshipped in several places. Nevertheless, the Hittites do seem to have been idolators in the gross sense of that term. In every respect they must have been an interesting and remarkable race, and it is singular that so little should be recorded of them. The precise situation of Carchemish was long a matter of doubt; but it is now known to have been on the western bank of the Euphrates, midway between the villages of Sajur and Birejik (the ancient Bir), at a point which overlooks the ford across the river, now traversed by the caravans. Some years ago, Mr. Skene, the British consul at Aleppo, pointed out this spot as the true site, and his opinion was subsequently verified by Mr. George Smith, the Assyrian explorer. The remains of the Hittite capital are there presented by an enormous heap of earth, covering a large space of ground, and bordered by ruined walls and towers of evident antiquity. Fragments of masonry and sculpture are seen upon the surface, and some valuable monuments have been discovered by excavation.

It has been remarked that Carchemish was a centre from which the art, the religion, and the civilisation of the East may have been carried through Asia Minor to the Ægean, and thence to Greece. The Hittites are credited with having invented a system of writing, the characters of which were hieroglyphic, with a resemblance in some of them to the primitive pictorial forms out of which hieroglyphics originated. The characters have always been found carved on stone in relief; but it has been conjectured that the first materials employed for writing were fusible tablets of metal, a specimen whereof still exists in the treaty of peace concluded between the Hittites and Rameses II. Several specimens of Hittite writing have been discovered in recent years, and, from the widely separated parts of Asia in which they have been found, it would appear that this species of hieroglyph was carried by the Hittites to countries beyond the limits of Cilicia, in the north-eastern corner of the Mediterranean. These tribes had a literary character at all times. In very primitive ages, as we read in the Book of Genesis, one of them was settled in the south of Palestine, at a town subsequently called Debir, but of which the original name was Kirjath-sepher, meaning "the City of Books." The Egyptian monuments make mention of a certain "writer of books, of the vile Kheta" (the Egyptian name for the Hittites, as Khatti was the Assyrian name); and this intellectual disposition caused them to impart their system of writing wherever their dominion was established, either by the sword or commerce. It is believed that, with certain modifications, the Hittite characters may be discovered in Cyprian Greek inscriptions, in the legends round the objects discovered by Dr. Schliemann on the site of Troy, and in the ancient alphabets of Lycia, Caria, and other parts of Asia Minor. Sculptures still existing in various localities of that region declare, by the costume of the figures and the general style of the art, that they are of Hittite origin; and it is therefore evident that the influence of this race reached even to the shores of the Ægean, if, indeed, it did not in time extend across that sea into the islands and the continent of Greece.

In the early history of Western Asia we see the birth and progress of a few splendid empires, and the formation of certain distinct nationalities which have attained conspicuous positions in the annals of the world. The well-springs of all modern life are discoverable in the records of primeval communities. The methods of government, the practices of arms, the principles of religion, the subtleties of literature and science, the adornments of art, and even the germs of social manners, may be found in the several states which arose on the borders of the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, and the Mediterranean. It would be difficult to exaggerate the influence of those states on the subsequent condition of Europe. We think the thought of Western Asia, worship in the spirit of some at least among its religious forms, and develop our art from roots which were planted in those very ancient days. In the popular estimation, Greece and Rome were the originators of modern civilisation; but Greece and Rome were merely intermediate links in the solid and brilliant chain. We have only in recent days perceived the full debt we

owe to tribes and nationalities which could point to a venerable antiquity when the Hellenes were beginning in their turn to influence the destinies of men. The history, the manners, and the arts of primitive Asia were almost wholly unknown to us until a time within the recollection of men not yet old. It seems never to have occurred to earlier generations that beneath the soil of Western Asia were the heaped-up treasures of buried knowledge —the skeletons of extinct dynasties, the footprints of vanished generations, the works of their hands, the records of their deeds, the outward and imperishable manifestations of their desires, their emotions, and their thoughts. Except in the historical portions of the Bible, we had scarcely any satisfactory account of Western Asia, its powerful monarchies, its teeming populations, its arts, and its creeds. But the book of antiquity has been opened by modern hands, and the palaces of Sennacherib and of Nebuchadnezzar are as familiar to our minds as the fortress of a mediæval baron.

As the reader has seen, the two principal races of the early world were those which are sometimes termed the Semitic and the Hamitic. The latter is by modern ethnologists generally designated the Turanian, and its importance becomes greater in proportion as we know more of primitive times. The powerful monarchies of Babylonia and Egypt belonged to this branch of the human family; so also did the dominion of the Hittites; the Semitic Empire of Assyria was largely influenced by the religion, the arts, and the abstruse science of the Turanian. Chaldees, who even furnished no small part of the Assyrian population; and it may be questioned whether the Jewish people were not mingled in some degree with the same gifted and energetic race. The Hamite was a soldier, and, in a certain rudimentary sense, a politician. As a builder, he constructed superb palaces, prodigious temples, and cities of enormous size, whose bulk and vastness it is perhaps doubtful whether later times have ever equalled. He was the originator of commerce, sending his ships in one direction to the Indies, and in the other to the western limits of the Mediterranean, and the fringes of the Atlantic foam. The earth did not exhaust his energies, nor the sea itself limit the enterprises of his far-reaching curiosity. Through the brilliant clearness of the Chaldæan air he observed the motions of the heavenly bodies, mapped out the sky into constellations, and noted the obscuring of the planets by the sun and moon. He catalogued the fixed stars, measured time by sun-dials, and, it is believed, invented several astronomical instruments. In the dawn of history he stands forth a gigantic figure, intellectual and strong.

Very different were the qualities of the Semitic race. Whatever art the nations of that race possessed, as evidenced by the remains of antiquity, was derived from the Hamitic communities; not without modifications and particular developments in special directions, but still with a constant reference to principles which the Turanians were the first to formulate and apply. The ruling sentiment in the minds of the Semites was the sentiment of religion. It is, of course, perfectly true that this sentiment existed also among the people of Hamitic origin; but with them (excepting in the case of Egypt) it was apparently less powerful and less distinctive. The chief Semitic races were the Syrian, the Jewish, and the Arabian; and in all of these the influence of religion was stronger than any other. With the Syrians and the Arabians, belief was, for the most part, idolatrous; with the Jews it was monotheistic and spiritual; but in each instance religion was the most important of the facts of life. The Jews themselves frequently receded towards idolatry; still, the tendency of the race was to religion in some form, and it is this circumstance which shapes and colours their entire history. When the theological systems of Greece and Rome were worn out, Christianity arose in Palestine, though in a Palestine which had for some time been subjected to Hellenic influences; and when the populations of South-western Asia were almost hopelessly corrupt, it was from Semitic Arabia that renovation came, under the guidance of Mohammed. Thenceforward the religion of Mohammed and the religion of Christ divide the most important nations of the world; and both are of Semitic ancestry and birth.

Ancient history is remarkable in nothing more than this—that it is at first the history of a few countries in Western Asia, and of the monarchy of Egypt. Europe long awaited its birth; and, although India and China were thickly peopled at a very remote period, and had apparently established social organisations of an elaborate and even splendid character, we hear little of them which can be received as authentic. The great actions of the world, so far as their records have been disclosed to us, move within a narrow circle through many ages and innumerable generations. Yet all this while vast communities were rising into shape beyond the Indus; systems of policy, of religion, and of morals, which have had abiding influences on a large proportion of the human race, were striking root in fertile and congenial soils; the high tragedies of life were being acted on grand and

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various stages; and conceptions of art, different from those of the West, were taking visible shape among nations to whom the West was only superficially known. Various circumstances have conspired to preserve the records of one-half the world, while those of the other are mainly lost. In religion, in literature, and in civilisation, we are heirs of the West, not of the East; and the division is really startling when we reflect on it. The multitudinous Indies are hidden from our sight until a comparatively recent time. But Chaldæa, Assyria, Persia, Judæa, Phœnicia, are more or less familiar to us; and Egypt, to which we must now turn our eyes, has a history which descends from ancient days in a long succession of warlike monarchs and distinct events.

CHAPTER V.

ANCIENT EGYPT.

Origin of the Egyptians—Geographical Position of Egypt—The Nile—Egypt in Ancient and Modern Times—General Characteristics of the Country—Political and Social State of Ancient Egypt—Religion, as understood by the Priests and by the People—Idolatry; Polytheism; Transmigration of Souls; Embalming the Dead; Mummies; Funeral Rites—The Pyramids—Account of the Building of the Pyramids given by Herodotus—Description of the Pyramids—Speculations as to the Origin of those Structures—Egyptian Architecture, Art, and Symbolism—Character of the Egyptians as represented in Ancient Monuments.

It has been convenient, in the earlier Chapters of this History, to trace the fortunes of the Chaldæan, Assyrian, and Babylonian Monarchies, and the rise of the Jewish people, before relating the annals of that strange land which has left us the Pyramids as enduring proofs of its early grandeur. But the antiquity of Egypt is certainly as great as that of its neighbours, and by some is believed to be greater. We undoubtedly hear of Egypt as a settled government, with an elaborate social state, at a very remote period; and a series of rulers, divided into an unusual number of dynasties, is mentioned as reigning on the banks of the Nile while the kingdoms of Asia were consolidating their power. The situation of the land is in some degree peculiar. Though belonging geographically to Africa, it is Asiatic in most other respects. Even physically, its nearness to Asia is such that the Isthmus of Suez—a piece of land neither very long nor very broad—is sufficient to conduct the traveller from the one continent to the other. Unlike the savage tribes found in many parts of Africa, the Egyptians have always shared the civilisation and the general characteristics of most Asiatic nations; and the history of the country has been intimately associated with the sovereignties existing in various ages on the eastern continent, to which Egypt may almost be considered as belonging.

In the original Hebrew of the Old Testament, Egypt is generally spoken of either as "the Land of Ham," or as "Mizraim"—more commonly the latter. It is also sometimes called "Rahab," or the Proud. Mizraim was the name given to the second son of Ham, and from this circumstance it has been usual to speak of the Egyptians as a Hamitic race. The Book of Genesis, however, says nothing as to Egypt having been among the possessions of Ham's posterity, and it is safer to assume that the original population of the country belonged to that vast Turanian family which in primitive days spread over a large portion of the world, and which to some extent corresponds with what in the Bible is called the race of Ham. Egypt may perhaps have been peopled in part from Ethiopia; at any rate, there is reason to believe that in remote times a great wave of population flowed in various directions from the countries south of Egypt, and helped to colonise that land, together with several parts of Western Asia. It must always be borne in mind, however, that these speculations as to the origin of nationalities rest on very slight bases. The testimony of language will often (though not invariably) serve to establish the relationship between one people and another; but it is powerless to show where the parent stock came from in the first instance. Even allowing that the Egyptians were derived from the Ethiopians, and that the Ethiopians belonged to the Turanian division of the human race, the question still remains as to how the Turanians got to Ethiopia. That the earliest movements of the principal historic races were from Asia to Europe and Africa, and not from either Africa or Europe to Asia, is generally admitted; and in that case the African Turanians who, according to Sir Henry Rawlinson, settled in Arabia and Chaldæa, must have come originally from the Asiatic continent, to which, in later though still very distant times, they

returned. However this may have been, the ancient Egyptians may be set down as mainly Turanians—in the language of the Bible, Hamites or Cushites; but it was not long ere a Semitic element made its appearance, and in this way the language acquired a prevalent Semitic character in its grammar, though not, it would seem, in its vocabulary.

The boundaries of Egypt have at all times been pretty nearly the same. The country, in truth, consists of little else than the valley of the Nile, and both to the east and to the west is neighboured by sterile deserts—the deserts of Arabia and of Libya. Northward are the waters of the Mediterranean; while to the south extend the countries now known as Nubia, Sennaar, Kordofan, and Northern Abyssinia, but which by the ancient Greeks and Romans were all comprised under the general designation of Ethiopia. These last-mentioned regions, lying on the mysterious courses of the Upper Nile, were associated with a large amount of mythology, and were considered as being almost within the borders of the supernatural world. Scarcely anything gives to Egypt so marked and distinctive a character as the mighty river—"the Abyss of Waters," as the Egyptians themselves called it—which flows throughout its entire length. Even the Pyramids, and the other remains of ancient greatness, are not more closely associated in our thoughts with the land of the Pharaohs and the Ptolemies than the marvellous stream, whose source was long an enigma, whose waters are the very emblem of the productive powers of Nature, whose annual deluge carries fertility to regions which would else be barren, and whose banks are crowned with ruins of old cities, the names of which, even carelessly pronounced, are as the dreams of empire and the echoes of forgotten faiths. The Nile runs for the greater part of its course through lands which are not Egyptian; yet it is chiefly of Egypt that we think when we mention this river. To describe its course and general characteristics is the province rather of the geographer than of the historian; yet it should here be mentioned that we cannot even now affirm with certainty that all the head-waters of the Nile have been clearly revealed. In 1863, Captains Speke and Grant announced that they had found the source of the old historic stream, or at least one of the sources, in Lake Victoria Nyanza. But to some, even at that time, it appeared doubtful whether the river did not rather flow through the lake than rise out of it; and it is now generally believed that the most important of the many streams which ultimately unite in the Nile have their origin south of the Victoria Nyanza. The river of Egypt, therefore, must still be considered as coming from wild and distant tracts, of which little is known; and indeed it is certain that the grand body of waters is fed from several wells, and draws its abounding life from many remote arteries. In its more familiar course, the Nile flows through Abyssinia, Sennaar, and Nubia, passing, by numerous cataracts, from one level to another, and entering Egypt about the Tropic of Cancer. Finally, it empties itself into the Mediterranean by two channels, which form the celebrated delta of Egypt, so called from the similarity of its triangular shape to the fourth letter of the Greek alphabet.

In some respects, though not in all, the present appearance of the Nile and of the bordering lands is similar to that which greeted the eyes of the Pharaohs. In Upper Egypt, the river flows rapidly between steep yellow cliffs, which sometimes come down nearly to the water; in Lower Egypt, further to the north, the stream passes through a wide and richly-cultivated plain, bounded east and west by the yellow fringes of the desert. Groves of palm-trees, springing from the water's edge, or clustering about humble villages, give diversity to broad fields of corn and barley, green in the spring season with that intense vitality which is derived from the Nilotic mud and from the yearly inundations. The brilliance of a rainless climate shines now, as it shone thousands of years ago, on all this wealth of vegetation, extended between sand and sand; on the reaches of the mysterious stream, pouring from the hollows of inaccessible hills; and, as the delta is approached, on the gigantic masses of the Pyramids, confronting the ever-shifting desert with the calmness of Eternity. But where, in ancient days, the sun lit up cities of titanic grandeur and superb adornment, the palaces of splendid kings, and the temples of a gorgeous symbolism, it now reveals only the ruins of a vanished greatness, and the relics of a dead religion. In the time of the Pharaohs, and even at a later date, the course of the river was marked by a thick growth of flags and reeds, where countless wild-fowl built their nests and reared their young. The papyrus shot forth abundantly, and the many-tinted and delicately-perfumed lotus—the flower of forgetfulness and dreams—spread its blooms upon the current. Fish-pools and conduits gave life to the great river; and to and fro upon the water-way darted the pleasure-galleys of the king, and the skiffs of humble subjects. But the jungle of reeds, through which the ripples stole with such a furtive brightness, and which is in-

dissolubly associated with the infant Moses and the daughter of Pharaoh, has for ages disappeared. In but few localities can the papyrus or the lotus be found; the fish-pools are ruined, and the conduits, left to decay, no longer answer the purposes for which they were designed. A blight of poverty is on the land, and towns of second-rate importance inadequately perpetuate the memories of old renown. Still, the majesty of Egypt can never be wholly destroyed while the radiance and serenity of its atmosphere remain undimmed; while the historic river flows with unabated volume by historic sites; and while temple and pyramid and column, the monuments of august dominion, are yet reflected in its waters.

The soil along the whole valley of the Nile is alluvial, being brought down from the higher lands of Ethiopia by the current of the river. This has of course been accumulating for ages; yet the rate of increase is so slow that even now the depth is not very great, and the investigator soon comes upon the rocks which form the actual channel of the stream. These are limestone as far as the upper part of what is called the Thebaid—the region in which Thebes was situated; after which follow other species of rocks, and finally, at Syene, is the granite which supplied the ancient Egyptians with material for colossal statues and obelisks. It is believed that the rocks lying at the base of the Egyptian land are gradually subsiding, while those at the head of the Red Sea are rising. Change, therefore, in more ways than one, has been busy in this country of tradition, and in most respects that change has been for the worse. In ancient days, Egypt had its gardens, orchards, and vineyards; vegetable productions in great variety gave easy sustenance to the people; and the growth of corn was so vastly in excess of what the natives required for their own food, that the valley of the Nile was regarded as one of the granaries of the world. Works of irrigation were carried out on a large scale, and the natural fertility of the soil, resulting from the yearly overflow of the river, was still further increased by artificial means. The consequence was, that even at an early date the population of Egypt was very dense, but that nevertheless prosperity and abundance were universal. It was to Egypt that Abraham went when Canaan was stricken with famine; and this character of productiveness was perpetuated from age to age. Indeed, even at the present time, in spite of bad government and wasted resources, the peasantry of Egypt, though leading miserable and degraded lives, do not often suffer from actual hunger. The beneficence of Nature, in such favoured regions, mitigates in some degree the stupidity and selfishness of man.

The government of ancient Egypt was monarchical, priestly, and military. It would appear that there was no hereditary aristocracy, unless in very primitive times; but a system of land-tenure, fairly contrived for the good of all classes, is known to have existed. The soil belonged to the king, with the exception of that which was the inalienable property of the priests; but lands were made over to the soldiers, who probably gave their service in exchange, to the great officers of state, and to the several towns and villages, which were thus enabled to provide for their wants. In the beginning of her history, Egypt was mainly a pastoral country: after awhile, the admirable opportunities for commerce resulting from the neighbourhood of the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, and from the facilities presented by the Isthmus of Suez for trafficking between the East and West, created a considerable trade. When Solomon was reigning in Israel, the Egyptians exported large numbers of horses and chariots of war, and, as we have seen, corn was frequently supplied to the surrounding nations. They had also some manufactures, and in the First Book of Kings (x. 28) we read of the Israelites buying of them linen yarn, which, by comparison with a passage in Ezekiel (xxvii. 7), appears to mean "fine linen with broidered work." Society in ancient Egypt presents in many respects a notable similarity to that of the modern world. It was in truth a highly organized society—monarchical, theocratical, military, and industrial. The power of the king, though great, was not without strict limits. His will was subordinate to the laws, and the laws were interpreted by the priests, who were extremely influential, and could at any time check the actions of the sovereign, if they seemed in excess of justice or prudence. The people were singularly amenable to government, and, as they commonly went unarmed, it is reasonable to suppose that social order was well maintained. As a rule, punishment for offences was not severe, and capital sentences were almost restricted to murder, though all crimes of violence were sharply handled. Caste did not exist among this remarkable people; yet the leading classes of priests, soldiers, husbandmen, artisans (including tradesmen), and labourers, were very distinctly defined and separated. Women occupied a high position, and, although concubinage was allowed, the system of harem life, which has done so great a mischief to other Oriental countries, had no place beneath the sceptre of the Pharaohs.

Religion was the principal element in the life of the ancient Egyptians. It modified their political state, coloured the whole of their society, affected their architecture, and gave a specific tone to whatever literature they possessed. The priests filled the chief offices of the country, expounded the laws, monopolised the great branches of learning, and were the judges, physicians, and architects of the land. The kings seem not to have belonged to this class by birth, but, on succeeding to the crown, they were adopted into it, and were instructed in the mysteries of the ancient faith. Being regarded as not far short of divine, the priests were exempt from all duties save those of their calling. Their lives, however, were subject to many restrictions, and burdened by a great variety of ceremonial observances. They were not forbidden to marry, but each had only one wife, whereas a species of polygamy was the rule in other classes. Purity, rather than asceticism, seems to have been the law of their conduct, and it is doubtful whether, in the best ages of Egypt, the religious hierarchy could be charged with the gross license prevalent in the temples of some other lands. The nature of the Egyptian religion was so complicated, abstruse, and mystical, that it is very difficult to give anything like an adequate idea of it in general terms. Beginning with a sort of Fetichism, or low Nature-worship, it afterwards passed into the condition of high Nature-worship—that form of devotion which has been called cosmic, from its contemplating the whole body of the universe as an organised existence, animated by the transcendent glory of the Divine intellect. This conception is undoubtedly capable of very sublime developments. It is an exalted kind of Pantheism, the materialistic basis of which is kindled and transfigured by the spiritual radiance that flames above. But it was also capable of extreme perversions, and in fact lent itself with fatal readiness to several forms of idolatry. Unfortunately, the priests did not present the highest interpretation of their doctrines to the popular mind. They had an esoteric and an exoteric lore: the first for themselves and a few privileged persons; the second for the vulgar. It appears to have been considered that the people could understand nothing but what was gross and palpable. A conviction of this nature, persistently carried out, is certain to produce the very state which it pre-supposes; and accordingly we find that the Egyptians worshipped images, animals, and vegetables, with a base subjection of the soul to merely transitory forms, which moved the wonder and derision of the Greeks.

Plutarch, who wrote a very interesting treatise on the worship of Isis and Osiris, remarks that, by adoring animals as gods, the Egyptians had not only filled their religious worship with contemptible and ridiculous rites, but had driven the weak and simple-minded into the utmost extravagance of superstition. Nevertheless, he fully admits that the ceremonies of this ancient race were not instituted on irrational grounds, nor built on mere fable, but were founded with a view to promote the morality and happiness of the people. The selection of particular animals for worship, and thence, by an easy transition, the worship of figures representing them, may have been due in the first instance to an attempt to represent symbolically, and in tangible forms, certain abstract qualities of the Deity, to which the nature of the animals was thought to correspond. It may also have been desired, in some instances, to protect the lives of creatures useful to man by surrounding them with a sacred character: as, for example, the ichneumon, which destroys the eggs of the crocodile, or the ibis, which kills venomous reptiles. Again, in other instances, the motive may have been to prevent the people from eating the flesh of beasts which were reputed unclean. But so little was this reverence for particular animals a part of the very essence of the Egyptian religion, that the same creature would be held sacred in one locality, and in another be offered in sacrifice, or consumed as food. Wherever the crocodile was regarded as a type of Deity, the ichneumon lost its special protection; and the ichneumon rose into favour where the crocodile ceased to be invested with divine attributes.*

The Egyptian religion, as understood by the priests, though certainly not as understood by the mass of the people, was apparently a system of Monotheism. It is true that even the priests admitted a great variety of gods as inferior powers, charged with particular offices in the great scheme of the universe; but these were hardly more than a species of genii—perhaps, in the more primitive ages, they were simply deified attributes of the one Supreme Being. That such a system has a tendency to develop into Polytheism cannot be denied; and this was undoubtedly the result among the Egyptian populace. The gods of the Egyptian Pantheon were divided into two classes—the greater and the less. Of the first there were eight, one of whom generally formed, in conjunction with two others, a triad, which was worshipped by

* Sir Gardner Wilkinson's "Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians." Second Series. Vol. I., chap. 12.

some particular city or district with peculiar veneration.* In many respects, the religion of the Greeks and Romans betrays an Egyptian parentage. The profound metaphysical systems of Pythagoras and Plato were largely derived from the same source; the mystical abstractions of Neo-Platonism, which arose in Alexandria, were of similar origin; and it is not too much to say that the whole spiritual history of modern times has been influenced by the learning of Egyptian priests. After the Divinity, who in the estimation of the learned was the only real God, was never represented in the Egyptian sculptures by any symbol or visible form, but was worshipped in silent adoration. Herodotus says that the people of Egypt were the first who asserted the immortality of the human soul, and that they believed in its ultimate union with another human body after a lapse of three thousand years, during which it passed through the forms of all the animals of air, earth, and water.

BUILDING A PYRAMID.

eight superior gods came a host of minor deities and dæmons, the exact number of whom cannot now be determined, but who must have been multitudinous, seeing that every month and every day of the year was consecrated to a particular divinity, and that trees, rivers, and hills, the constellations and the elements, had their tutelary genii, who were worshipped through the medium of the objects with which they were associated.

The essentially non-idolatrous character of the Egyptian religion, notwithstanding that, for the satisfaction of the vulgar, there were many idols, is shown by the circumstance that the Supreme

* Wilkinson's "Ancient Egyptians."

The souls of extremely virtuous persons, however, were re-united with the Divine essence; while those of ordinary people were subjected to various degrees of punishment, proportioned to the amount of each individual's wrong-doing in this life. Plato speaks of a probationary period of ten thousand years, but adds that the better class of souls were released after the completion of three thousand. The ancient Egyptians do not seem to have believed in eternal punishment, nor to have recognised any local hell; for the mysterious land called Amenti, into which departed spirits were introduced, can hardly be said to have possessed that character. All penalties were in their eyes provisional and reformatory, and were carried out in the persons

of those animals to whose bodies the souls of most men were consigned after death. But beyond this period of suffering, necessary to the purification of the spirit by discipline and knowledge, there extended for every human being the prospect of ultimate reconciliation with the Divine Nature. Such, at any rate, were the original views of the Egyptians, although a more gloomy spirit seems afterwards to have prevailed.

It was probably a belief in the resurrection of the body which induced the Egyptians to embalm their dead, and to bestow on them unusual care. The corpse of every man and woman was devoted to the god Osiris, who, together with the goddess Isis, ruled over the region of the West—of the setting sun—which corresponded with the Hades of the Greeks, and was supposed to be the land of departed spirits. The deceased, whether female or male, received the name of Osiris, was swathed so as to present an appearance similar to the effigies of that deity, and was marked with his symbols. Sacrifices having been offered, the mummy was placed in a moveable closet with folding doors, and ultimately conveyed on a sledge to the place of burial. This was almost invariably situated on the western side of the Nile, for the reason already mentioned; and the tombs varied

RUINS AT KARNAK.

in their character according to the wealth or poverty of the relations. Those whose means were small, deposited their dead in large pits dug to receive several mummies, or in niches in the sides of caves artificially formed in the rocks, and closed up with masonry when full. The dead bodies of the rich were likewise deposited in caves; but the caves in their case were elaborately adorned, and provided with a chamber over the actual tomb—sometimes with more than one. The walls, which were often of masonry, were adorned with paintings, sculptures, and hieroglyphical inscriptions; and in these chambers religious services for the dead were frequently performed. Persons of very great importance, such as kings, priests, and high officials, were carried to the tomb with the utmost pomp and ceremony; and in all cases matters were so ordered that the procession should pass over a lake, which was regarded as symbolical of the gulf between this world and the next. Here a boat was ready to convey the hearse across; but before the body was permitted to enter the vessel, a species of trial before forty-two judges, who sat in a semicircle on the margin of the water, was solemnly conducted. The part of accuser might be undertaken by any one; but if he failed to prove that the deceased had led an evil life, he was himself subjected to severe punishment. If, on the other hand, the charge was substantiated to the satisfaction of the forty-two judges, the priests denied the rites of sepulture to the corpse. This custom was carried out with such absolute impartiality that even kings had to undergo the ordeal, and were sometimes condemned. The body was in that case privately buried by the friends, and the penalty seems to have consisted solely in the refusal of religious rites, which, however, was regarded as an overwhelming disgrace.

The trial on the way to the grave was considered a counterpart of what the disembodied soul had to endure on entering the land of shadows. In the religious system of the Egyptians, the spirit of the departed was conducted by the god Anubis before the great judge, Osiris, and weighed in the scales of truth, so as to determine the amount of its transgression. From pictures found on the walls of ancient tombs which have of late years been opened, it would appear that some terrific circumstances attended this inquiry; yet, when taken in conjunction with the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, and the belief in ultimate restoration to Divine favour, it cannot be said that they at all convey the idea of everlasting punishment. In the earlier periods of Egyptian history, the idea of a future state, as we have already remarked, was decidedly cheerful; but this conception acquired a much darker character after the Twelfth Dynasty. The position of the tombs is remarkable. They reach for a distance of twenty miles south of Memphis along the ridge of high ground west of the Nile, as it was necessary to convey the bodies a long way from the river, in order that they might be beyond the range of the yearly inundation. This, and the previous custom of embalming the dead, rendered the rites of sepulture a serious charge to the poor. Herodotus relates that there were three kinds of embalming: the first very expensive, the second less so, and the third comparatively cheap. Even the cheapest, however, must have been somewhat costly, since it involved the steeping of the body for seventy days in an infusion of natron—a sesqui-carbonate of soda. In addition to this, the corpse, as we have said, could be buried only at a considerable distance; so that the whole ceremonial was of a peculiarly onerous nature.

That the Pyramids of Egypt were sepulchral monuments, is the opinion generally accepted by the learned, though other speculations have not been wanting. They were the mausoleums of kings, and in the Third Pyramid the body of the founder has been discovered. Of all artificial objects, they are those which we most closely associate with Egypt; and of all remains of antiquity, they have attracted, for many reasons, the largest amount of attention. It is usual to think of the Pyramids of Egypt as if they were few in number: in reality, there are about sixty-nine, which extend along the western bank of the Nile for nearly seventy miles, giving an average of one to a mile. Taken altogether, they form a vast cemetery, where lie the bones of Egyptian monarchs, commencing, perhaps, with the Third, and ending with the Twelfth Dynasty. All are constructed after the same model, and in every instance the four sides face the cardinal points of the compass. This circumstance has occasioned some writers to believe that the Pyramids were designed for astronomical observations, while the exact dimensions of the several parts have been held to indicate that these structures were nothing more than standards of measurement. It is not unlikely that they may have been used for both purposes; yet that they were also mausoleums appears sufficiently established. The principal group is north-west of the ancient site of Memphis, near the modern village of Ghizeh, where the attention is specially attracted by three huge monuments of triangular form, the largest of which, called the Great Pyramid, was built by Cheops (a king belonging to the Fourth

Dynasty) more than two thousand years before Christ. This wonderful edifice is an enormous mass of masonry, quarried from the eastern hills, and put together with consummate mastery—an artificial cavern, so to speak, divided into many chambers and passages, and containing a sarcophagus of red granite, now empty, but probably holding in former times the body of the founder. Cheops, the builder of this mausoleum, was, according to the account given by the Egyptian priests to Herodotus, a wicked and unjust monarch. Having shut up all the temples, he forbade the people to offer sacrifices, and at the same time commanded them to work for himself. Some were forced to drag heavy stones from the eastern mountains to the banks of the Nile; others were ordered to transport these stones across the river, and to draw them to the western ranges. A hundred thousand men worked together for a period of three months, and were then relieved by others. For ten years the Egyptians were harassed by preliminary labours, including the construction of a road for the transport of the material—a work which, in the opinion of Herodotus, was nearly equal to that of the Great Pyramid itself. Twenty years were expended in erecting the main structure; and for raising the stones to the higher parts, the artificers employed machines of wood, the exact nature of which has always been a mystery.

The three chief Pyramids at Memphis stand on an elevated plateau of rock, over which the neighbouring sands have drifted, and which is still further cumbered by immense heaps of broken stones. The stones have apparently fallen from the Pyramids themselves, for these stupendous structures, massive as they are, have undoubtedly suffered, not only from the ravages of time, but from the rough usage of successive generations. With materials supplied by the Great Pyramid, the city of Cairo has in part been built; so that the base of the monument, which was formerly 756 feet square, is now reduced to 732 feet, while the height has dwindled from 480 to 460 feet. The polished casing which once covered the entire work has long since dropped off or been carried away, with the exception of some stones at the base, though it is believed to have remained until the early Christian ages, or even later. The interiors of the larger Pyramids have been damaged, no less than the outer walls. Through many ages, from the time of the Roman Empire downwards, the mysterious rooms and passages have been entered, in the hope of making discoveries; and the obstacles which the original builders had interposed at every turn, as if to guard some profound secret, have often been violently removed, to the serious injury of the structures. Even gunpowder has in recent times been employed to open recesses and supposed chambers. Nothing can give a more striking idea of the massive strength of the Pyramids than the fact that some of them have been thus despoiled and shattered for many centuries, yet are still in the main the same buildings on which Abram looked when he journeyed into Egypt, and which were venerable antiquities in the days of Cleopatra.

It was evidently the desire of the Egyptians that the Pyramids should not be pried into by vulgar or alien eyes. In every case, the entrance, which is on the north side, is small and obscure; the interior passages are narrow and tortuous; and stone portcullises frequently bar the way. But it would seem, from inscriptions on the walls, and from the account given by Pliny the Elder in his great work, that the Romans penetrated into these strange monuments almost as far as modern investigators. At a later period—towards the close of the twelfth Christian century—one of the Saracen Caliphs opened the Second Pyramid, as appears by a record in the sepulchral chamber; and from the middle of the sixteenth century, when Pierre Belon visited them, the Pyramids have been repeatedly examined. The explorations of Mr. Davison in the last century, and of Belzoni and Colonel Howard Vyse in the present, are very generally known. If perpetual descriptions, some of them written by tourists of superficial acquirements, were capable of vulgarising a really great subject, the Pyramids would have been vulgarised ere now. But they remain eternally guarded by their mystery, their grandeur, and their stupendous age: familiarity itself has not discrowned them. As they are approached across the desert lying westward of the Nile, it is often felt by travellers that they are of less extraordinary proportions than had been anticipated—a diminution perhaps attributable to the translucent clearness of the atmosphere. A nearer approach, however, shows these ancient monuments in their true bulk and vastness, and it is perceived that they are veritable mountains of hewn stone, soaring upwards, from their rocky base, as if Nature had wrought with man towards the production of a prodigy.

Pursuing his account of the Pyramids, Herodotus relates that Cheops, who built the largest of the structures, reigned fifty years. After his death, his brother Chephren succeeded to the kingdom, and at once commenced erecting what is known as the Second Pyramid. The priests told their Greek visitor that Chephren reigned fifty-six years: thus,

for rather more than a century the Egyptians groaned under the labours and exactions of these two monarchs in the execution of their enormous works. During the whole time, the temples are said to have been closed with the utmost strictness; and the people, even in the age of Herodotus, regarded the memory of Cheops and Chephren with so much detestation that they would rarely mention their names, but called the Pyramids after Philition, a shepherd who in those early days kept his cattle in the vicinity of the western deserts.* The description given by the Father of History has a basis of truth; but it is obviously mingled with fabulous matter, the result either of the writer's misunderstanding, or of misrepresentations on the part of the priests. We now know that Shura, the first king of the Fourth Dynasty, built the northern Pyramid of Abou-Seir (south of the group near Ghizeh) before the erection of the Great Pyramid by Cheops, his successor. The first of the two monarchs mentioned by Herodotus appears in reality to have borne the name of Suphis or Shufu; the second (Chephren) was called Sensuphis or Num-Shufu. Being brothers, they reigned together, and were joint builders of the Great Pyramid. The Second Pyramid may have been commenced by Sensuphis, and completed by a ruler of the Fifth Dynasty, named Shafra or Sephres; while the Third was built by the king whom Herodotus designates Mycerinus, but whose real name was Mencheres or Men-ka-ré.

As already stated, the Pyramids were erected on a rocky plateau; but the lower chambers were actually hollowed out of this stony substratum, and the massive walls rose above them in ever-decreasing dimensions. There is reason to believe that the size of each structure was proportioned to the length of the king's reign in which it was built. In the first place, the chamber intended for the sarcophagus was excavated in the rock, with a narrow passage down to it, only large enough to admit the tomb. A cubical block of masonry was then built over the descent; and above this, which formed the first stage of the edifice, other stages were added for each year of the sovereign's reign, while those below were extended laterally in a proportionate degree. The final process of providing an ornamental surface to the whole work was performed after the king's death. These outer stones, the faces of which were quarried to the required slope, were brought to a resplendent polish, so that the effect of the Pyramids in their best days must have been far more imposing than what we now behold. The Second Pyramid was cased with granite from Upper Egypt, and remains of this envelope are still observable in the upper part. To give a long series of exact measurements and calculations would be out of place in a work of this nature, and would convey to the ordinary reader no vivid or instructive impression; but it may be as well to repeat what has often been observed before—that the height of the Chief Pyramid is nearly one-third greater than that of St. Paul's Cathedral, and that its base is somewhat larger than the area of Lincoln's Inn Fields. A singular statement is made by Herodotus, on the faith of what he was told by the priests, to the effect that the chambers in the rock at the base of the Great Pyramid formed a sort of island, surrounded by water introduced from the Nile through a canal. No traces of any such canal have been discovered in modern times, and it seems scarcely possible that the Nile should at any period have been let into the building, as the floor of the subterranean chamber is about thirty-seven feet above the level of the yearly inundation.

In conjunction with the Chief Pyramids, several smaller structures of the same shape, and a number of tombs, break the surface of the plateau. The Great Pyramid is flanked by three smaller ones; the Third is companioned in the same way; and the latter, together with the Second Pyramid, is surrounded by traces of square enclosures, and approached from the east through enormous masses of ruins, which seem to have belonged to some vast temple. This was in fact the burial-ground of the great city of Memphis. One pyramid—that of Abou-Ruweysh—stands to the north of the three forming the Ghizeh group, and is the most northern of all. It is in a very ruinous state, and by some is thought to have been built by Venephes, a monarch of the First Dynasty; but the point is doubtful. Southward of the famous edifices at Ghizeh are five forming the group of Abou-Seir. These are much smaller than the others, and one of them appears to have been erected to the memory of some great functionary. Still further south, at Sakkara, are eleven pyramids, built of stone, and approached by inclined causeways from the plains below. One of them is called the Pyramid of Degrees, from the steps on its sides. This structure has an apartment roofed with timbers, and the doorway was at one time covered with small coloured porcelain tiles, containing an inscription with the name and title of one of the Egyptian monarchs. At Dashour are five pyramids, two of which are constructed of brick. These are the last that can be said to form part of

* Herodotus, II. 124—8.

the burying-ground of Memphis and Heliopolis; but there are many others in the direction of Ethiopia. The brick pyramids were of course regarded as less sumptuous than those of stone; and, according to Herodotus, one of these inferior structures at Dashour presented a sort of apologetic inscription, which ran thus:—"Do not despise me in comparison with the pyramids of stone, for I excel them as much as Jupiter excels the other gods. By plunging a pole into a lake, and collecting the mire that adhered to it, men made bricks, and in this manner built me."* Bricks, however, were not used for works of a monumental character until the declining days of Egyptian art, though for inferior edifices they were employed from a very early period. Hence the necessity for an excuse in the case of the Dashour pyramid, which, so far from excelling the others, undoubtedly exhibited a meaner style of building.

No hieroglyphical inscriptions have been found in the Pyramids, as in tombs of less pretension; and it is thence inferred that these structures were erected before the invention of that style of writing. Belzoni, however, states that he found some hieroglyphics on one of the blocks forming a mausoleum to the west of the Great Pyramid; and Herodotus says that the polished casing of that immense structure was covered with figures and inscriptions. If any of these still remained, we should probably know a good deal more than is now possible concerning the circumstances under which the edifices arose out of the desert. As it is, speculation has had a wide field for its activity, and it has even been doubted whether the actual builders of the Pyramids were of Egyptian race. Some have believed that the monarchs who erected these vast works belonged to an Ethiopian dynasty; while others have contended that the very workmen were aliens, being no other than Israelites of the captivity. It is expressly stated by Josephus that his countrymen laboured on the Pyramids, and the American scholar, Professor Anthon, adopted this view. If, however, the Chief Pyramids were built, as most inquirers now suppose, some centuries before Abram went into Egypt, it is clear that the Israelites cannot have had anything to do with them. The authority of Josephus, living as he did under the Roman Empire, is not conclusive with regard to matters happening so many ages before his time; and the arguments by which his statement has been upheld do not go beyond that process of verbal ingenuity by which great conclusions are derived from a supposed similarity of names. Whoever built the Pyramids, it was probably not the Israelites.

Another conjecture, possessing some plausibility, is that the dynasty under which these monuments were erected was of Indian origin. Among the many suggested derivations of the word "Pyramid" (which, though coming to us through a Greek channel, is to be traced much farther back), is one which deduces it from the Sanscrit term "biroumas," meaning an honest and virtuous man. Herodotus says that the Egyptian word "piromis" had the same signification; and "pehram" meant a sacred place. This seems to show a connection between Egypt and India, and a certain similarity in the ancient religious systems of the two countries renders it not unlikely that very early times witnessed a considerable movement from the land of the Ganges to the land of the Nile. When the Hanoverian traveller, Wilford, towards the close of last century, described the Great Pyramid of Egypt to some Brahmins, they declared at once that it must have been a temple; and one of them asked if it had not an underground communication with the river. The question curiously corresponds with the statement of Herodotus about the canal connected with the Nile, which, as the priests told him, circled about the lower chambers of the Chief Pyramid. The German replied that such a passage was mentioned as having existed, and that a species of well was to be seen there at the present day; upon which the Brahmins gave it as their unanimous opinion that the structure had been originally appropriated to the worship of the goddess Padma-devi, and that the supposed sarcophagus was a trough, which on certain festivals her priests used to fill with the sacred water and lotus-flowers. Wilford is not an authority of high value, because it is known that in some respects he was egregiously misled by the Brahmins, who suited their information to what they saw he desired to establish; yet they may have been sincere in recognising a Hindu character in the features of the great structure identified with Cheops. Pyramids, with subterranean passages of immense length, are to be seen at Benares, a sacred city of the Brahmins in North-western India; and early in the present century a sphinx's head, similar to that which stands near the Second Pyramid of Ghizeh, was discovered on the banks of the Hypanis, or Kuban, among the ruins of some forgotten city. The spot is now within the southern limits of European Russia, between the Black Sea and the Caspian; but it seems at one time to have been subject to a Hindu influence, and it is a remarkable fact that the characters on

* Herodotus, II. 136.

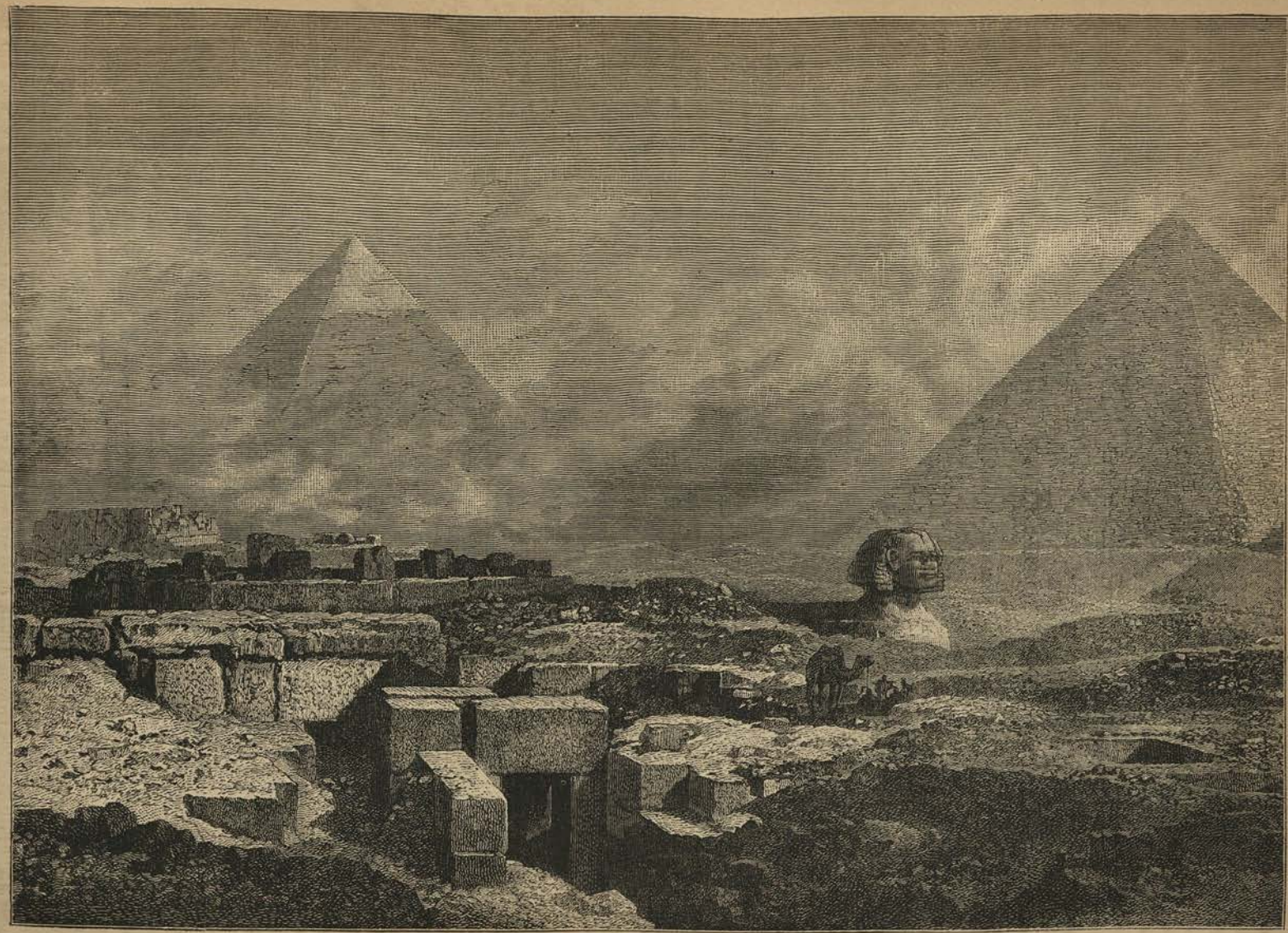
an ancient column, found there near the sphinx's head, show a close resemblance to those observed by Denon on several of the Egyptian mummies.*

We have dwelt thus long on the Pyramids, because they are the most distinctive relics of antiquity in Egypt, and because they are on every account among the most extraordinary buildings in the world. But Egyptian architecture generally was of a highly interesting character, and possessed many features of grandeur, and even of beauty. A certain materialistic feeling is observable in the palaces and temples of the Pharaohs, which are conspicuous for massiveness, bulk, and weight, in every part. This, however, is seen in all the great structures of the Hamitic races, and is not devoid of a peculiar majesty, which the mind itself, no less than the eye, is quick to apprehend. Wherever the Egyptian power had its royal seats or priestly centres, these magnificent buildings rose upon the banks of the Nile, and attracted the attention even of distant lands. At Thebes, at Memphis, at Elephantine, at Heliopolis, at Denderah, at Saïs, at Busiris, at Philæ, edifices of the most superb description were reared by the genius of Egyptian architects at the bidding of Egyptian kings. They were more frequently temples or mausoleums than palaces, for the Egyptians were pre-eminently a religious people. When we speak of the heaviness of these enormous piles, we should bear in mind the country in which they were situated, and the climate by which they were modified. No order of architecture can be rightly judged apart from its native surroundings and conditions; least of all the Egyptian. The grand buildings on the banks of the Nile were intended for a land in which, for a large part of the year, the sun shines with tyrannous heat and splendour. The weighty masses and cavernous depths of Egyptian architecture were singularly appropriate in a country where affluence of light produced the most impressive contrasts of shadow; so that what, under the grey diffusion of the North, would seem unbearably ponderous, must have stood forth, when touched by the magic of blue sky and tropic sun, a splendid interchange of gloom and radiance, varying with every variation of the passing hours. The vast size of these structures, moreover, relieved the flatness of the Nile scenery with the semblance of carven mountains, and presented images of abiding strength amidst the watery fluctuations of the river. Any tendency to heaviness was lightened by the richness of the adornments, by the brilliance and perfect harmony of the colour and gilding lavishly introduced, and by the frequent employment of the lotus-flower, the papyrus, the palm-leaf, and various plants, not merely as painted enrichments, but often in the very form of the columns. The tapering proportions of the obelisk still further qualified the massiveness of other architectural details.

Sculpture also was largely used, and the general character of Egyptian sculpture was in harmony with that of Egyptian architecture. These gigantic figures of gods, kings, heroes, and embodied virtues, which gave dignity and mysterious awe to the temples, are wanting in the grace, nobleness, and ideal humanity of the Greeks, but are certainly not deficient in the intense and sullen power of a people accustomed to brood much on the enigma of existence, and to dwarf the facts of life before the overwhelming weight and vastness of eternity. As an expression of passionless tranquillity, nothing can exceed the face of the Sphinx; and the statues of Rameses the Great, often used as columns in the façades of temples, are full of calm and self-reliant strength.† In some other respects, Egyptian art was corrupted by the monstrous ideas to which, at the bidding of religious faith, it was compelled to give expression. Symbolism, the fruitful mother of superstitions, is also the parent of many low artistic forms, as well as of some that are instinct with the highest and most elevating beauty. In ancient Egypt, the beauty was less apparent than the corruption. "The brutish gods of Nile," as Milton called them, were made visible to the popular eye in every foul distortion of animal life that a diseased imagination could conceive. Abominable combinations of distinct and irreconcilable animals—shapes of ugliness, terrific or grotesque—pass before the observer who would acquaint himself with the characteristics of Egyptian sculpture and painting. But there are other things in Egyptian art equally worthy of observation, and more agreeable to contemplate. The pottery and porcelain were often exquisitely beautiful in shape and decoration. These Africans understood the making of glass; and their articles of furniture and domestic use were generally executed in the most admirable taste. On the walls of temples and tombs, we see the daily life of the subjects of the Pharaohs and Ptolemies delineated with vivid and almost dramatic power. We know

* Art. "Pyramides," by Professor Anthon, in his edition of Lempriere's "Classical Dictionary," re-edited by E. H. Barker. 1825.

† The Sphinx was an emblem of the king, and, with the Egyptians, though not with the Greeks, was generally masculine.



THE PYRAMIDS AND SPHINX.

these wonderful people in their ordinary tasks and humble pastimes, no less than in their grandeur and their mystery. They appear to have been a race somewhat effeminate in appearance, gentle in manners, and of affectionate habits; slightly clothed, and living in some respects in accordance with primitive conditions. Yet they were the men who reared the Pyramids, and filled the world with echoes of austere dominion and more than mortal knowledge.

CHAPTER VI.

EARLY HISTORY OF EGYPT.

Sources of our Information on Egyptian History—Hieroglyphics, the Picture-writing of Egypt—The Rosetta Stone—Writings on the Papyri—The Ritual for the Dead—Obscurity of Early Egyptian Chronology—Computation of Time—The Legend of the Phœnix—Fabulous History of Egypt: the Rule of the Gods—The Story of Osiris and Isis—Meaning and Influence of the Myth—First Dynasty of Mortals—Successive and Contemporary Dynasties—The Reign of Nitocris—The Hyksos, or Shepherd Kings—Doubtful Origin of the Foreign Dynasty—Splendid Rule of the Twelfth (Theban) Dynasty—Semi-fabulous Career of Sesostris—Amenemha III.: the Labyrinth—General Character of the Shepherd Kings.

EVEN now we cannot be said to have anything like a complete knowledge of ancient Egyptian history; but we know more than our predecessors of a few generations ago. Until a very recent period, the only sources of information were the Books of Genesis and Exodus, and the writings of the Greeks and Romans—chiefly of the former. These, of course, were valuable in their way, but were far from making a perfect record. The Biblical narrative has reference merely to one set of events—those in which the Jewish people were concerned. The works of Herodotus, Diodorus Siculus, and others, are fragmentary, unmethodical, and not always of such a nature as to inspire confidence in their accuracy. Among the books on Egypt written in the Greek language was a history of the country by Manetho, a priest of Heliopolis (in Hebrew called On or Aun) during the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, at the beginning of the third century before Christ. This work was professedly compiled from certain inscribed pillars of great antiquity; but, whatever may have been its value, nothing now remains of it beyond a list of the thirty dynasties once reigning in Egypt (which Eusebius has preserved in his chronology), together with some fragments in the reply of Josephus to Apion, and in the writings of Syncellus, a monk living in the eighth century. Thus, the materials for Egyptian history were slight indeed, until the labours of modern scholars succeeded in interpreting the hieroglyphics visible on ancient monuments and rolls of papyrus.

The word "Hieroglyphics" is of Greek origin, and signifies "sacred engravings"—a designation given to this form of picture-writing because it was believed to be understood solely by the priests. Such was not invariably the case; but it is certain that hieroglyphics were more particularly used in inscriptions relating to the gods and to the affairs of religion, and that the Egyptian equivalent of the term—viz., *Neter-tu*—meant "sacred words." The characters thus employed were pictorial representations of various objects, so ordered as to suggest a definite train of ideas or concatenation of events. We have here the very commencement of the art of writing—that form which would naturally suggest itself in the first instance to a people desirous of giving visible expression to abstract thoughts. In their simplest manifestations, hieroglyphics were purely symbolical, representing natural objects by corresponding pictures, or general ideas by figurative analogies, or facts not capable of direct illustration by things which stand for them in an allegorical or enigmatical sense. When the art was rather more developed, it passed into the stage called "Kyriologic," where the signs employed had a phonetic value; that is to say, certain symbols were made to serve for the letters standing at the commencement of the corresponding words, and thus, in combination, formed other words. During the Sixth Egyptian Dynasty, more than two thousand years before our era, the system assumed the character called "Hieratic," in which the signs employed were conventional and arbitrary, presenting only a faint resemblance to the original types. This was the method employed by the priests, and was in time greatly modified by the exigences of literary composition. Another form of hieroglyphics was that in which the ordinary language of the people was expressed.

It was called "Demotic" (*i.e.*, popular), or "Enchorial" (of the country), and was used for records of civil transactions under the Ptolemies, and until the third or fourth century of the Christian era. The principles on which it was based were those of the hieratic method carried still further.

Of the various symbols used in hieroglyphics, upwards of a thousand have been discovered in monumental inscriptions, and it is not improbable that still more may be found. They are either sculptured or painted—drawn in outline or filled in. Some are painted as well as sculptured, and the colours are often various and brilliant. The language, as interpreted in recent times from the phonetic types, seems to have had an elaborate grammar and a copious vocabulary; it was capable of giving expression to a great deal of florid imagery, metaphor, and antithesis; and forms of verse have been detected, as well as prose. The primitive hieroglyphics continued to be used, notwithstanding the more convenient modifications of the hieratic and demotic styles, as late as the reign of Caracalla, the Roman Emperor. They were to some extent known to the Greeks and Romans, though doubtless not very intimately; but, from the tenth to the nineteenth century of the modern world, the picture-writing of Egypt was lost in absolute obscurity. On the revival of learning, attempts were made to decipher these mysterious characters, but without any result, and the achievement was reserved for times not greatly removed from our own. In 1799, the French, while in military occupation of Egypt, discovered at Rosetta, near the western mouth of the Nile, a piece of black basalt, about three feet long, and two feet and a half wide, containing an inscription in three distinct forms—primitive hieroglyphics, enchorial writing, and Greek. At the capitulation of Alexandria, this fragment of rock—now familiarly known as the Rosetta Stone—was given up to the English, and, being brought to London in 1802, was deposited in the British Museum, where it still remains. It was found among the ruins of Fort St. Julien, on the site of a temple dedicated by King Necho to the god Atum (the deity of the setting sun); and the inscription sets forth the decrees of a synod of priests assembled at Memphis about the year 196 B.C., the object of which synod was to commend the piety of the reigning monarch, Ptolemy V. (Epiphanes), his liberality to the temples, his remission of taxes, his victories, and his care for the welfare of the country in the erection of dams against the inundations of the Nile. By an examination of this stone, and of other Egyptian inscriptions, Dr. Young in the first instance, and the French *savant*, Champollion, at a somewhat later date, were enabled to lay the bases of a science of hieroglyphical interpretation, which Rosellini, Lepsius, Brugsch, Birch, Hincks, and others, have since perfected.*

All three forms of Egyptian writing—the simple hieroglyphic, the hieratic, and the demotic or enchorial—are found on the ancient *papyri* of the country. These *papyri* are either public documents or works of literature, and are frequently written with great care, elaboration, and beauty. The material employed is a kind of paper derived from the stalks of the papyrus, a species of rush growing in ponds and other watery places, and used by the Egyptians for a great variety of purposes. It is from the original name of this rush (*p-apu*) that the word "paper" is derived, through Greek and Latin channels; and from another Greek name for the same plant—viz., *bublos* or *byblos*—came the term *biblion* or *bible*, meaning simply a book. Several pieces of papyrus being glued together, rolls were formed of any size that might be desired; and the length sometimes extended to sixty feet. The breadth also was various, but seems never to have gone beyond the lesser cubit, or, in our measurement, one foot six inches. On this material the Egyptians wrote with a reed-pen, dipped in an ink or pigment which was sometimes black, and sometimes red. The hieratic or religious compositions retained some of the old hieroglyphic symbols, while making a considerable approach to the forms of writing; in the demotic system, the characters were those of a species of running hand, not unlike that which in this part of the world was formerly used in law documents. The lines were horizontal, with headings at the tops of the pages, and rubrical adornments. Works of a religious nature were illustrated with pictures, the designs of which were often excellently drawn, while the colouring was brilliant, with frequently a heightening of gold.

Immense numbers of *papyri* have been discovered in the present century, and subjected to minute examination. They belong to various epochs of Egyptian history, extending from an early date to the dynasty of the Ptolemies and the period of the Roman domination; and have been found principally in the hands of mummies, about other parts of the person, or under the swathings of the embalmed corpse. The Ritual for the Dead—a copy

* Hieroglyphics were not confined to Egypt. They were known to the Ethiopians and Assyrians, and probably to other nations of the ancient world as well. Among the Mexicans, and in the countries of Central America, the system of picture-writing was likewise practised.

of which was placed with every dead body of consequence, from the Eighteenth Dynasty to the time of the Romans—was often deposited in a wooden case, fashioned in the shape of Osiris, and curiously hidden in niches made for the purpose. This singular book can be traced up to the dynasty of the Pyramid-builders, and is consequently extremely ancient. About two hundred copies, in the form of Egyptian *papyri*, are now in Europe, and the most complete example is that belonging to the Italian Government, of which a version was published by the German scholar Lepsius. It is referred to the age of the Ptolemies, and is therefore comparatively modern; but although in the later ages, the tendency of the people was to abridge the exposition of their faith, or to be content with extracts, this particular specimen is perfect in all its details, and even contains some supplementary chapters. The title of the ritual is, "The Book of Departure from the Day, and Entrance into the Future State;" and the work was believed by the Egyptians to have been inspired or dictated by the god Thoth, the patron of letters. From this religious manual, the modern world has derived a very exact and intimate acquaintance with the theological system of ancient Egypt, especially as concerns the fortunes of the soul in the land of disembodied spirits—a subject on which we have touched in preceding pages.

But the *papyri* do not deal exclusively with matters of faith. Many of them are secular and literary, and our knowledge of Egyptian history and manners has been recruited from these unexceptionable sources. The result has been the creation of a vast body of learning, having special reference to Egypt, by which substantial addition has been made to the scanty records of former times. Writers on this subject are distinguished by the name of Egyptologists, and hardly any part of the antique world has received so much attention as the country of the Nile. Nevertheless, considerable obscurity still surrounds the annals of that land, and it is impossible to determine with precision the periods of the earlier dynasties. Egyptian chronology is a subject with respect to which different authors have different theories, and it cannot be said of any that they are more than conjectural. Yet it is evident that the Egyptian priests, who were the scientific men of the country, took great pains in the division of time and the record of events. The Pyramids were constructed in such a way as to be favourable to astronomical observations; and the temple at Denderah (the ancient Tentyra) contained two sets of figures which by some have been regarded as the signs of the Zodiac, though the inference is disputed. The priests alleged that they had discovered the exact length of the solar year; but, if so, they did not impart their knowledge to the people, who regarded the year as consisting precisely of 365 days, divided into eleven months of thirty days each, and one month of thirty-five days—a computation making no allowance for those extra hours and minutes on account of which it is necessary to add another day every fourth year, and to make other arrangements for the adjustment of the calendar. This would in time have caused an entire confusion of the seasons, had not the calculation been corrected by the observance of what was called the Tropical Year, the length of which was regulated by the recurrence of the great natural variations. The division thus distinguished consisted of three seasons, of four months each, called by names signifying "Vegetation," "Manifestation," and "Inundation." The last, of course, had reference to the annual overflow of the Nile, which occurs in the autumn: winter is a season of which the Egyptian has no need to take special notice.

In the scientific view of the priests, the year consisted of 365 days and a quarter—a calculation very near the truth, though not absolutely exact; and, like ourselves, they added a day every four years. This year was determined by the heliacal rising of Thoth, or Soth (the dog-star); for which reason it was known as the Sothic Year—in the writings of Latin authors, as the Canicular Year, or Annus Magnus.* The year of 365 days, without any addition, was called the Vague Year, and it is said that the priests were sworn never to alter it. Their oath, however, must have had reference to the people generally, and not to themselves as a learned and privileged corporation; for, as we have shown, they made a reckoning which was but slightly wrong. It is obvious that the divergence between the scientific and the popular year must in time have been considerable, and it was only once in every 1460 or 1461 years that the two exactly coincided. Neither the people nor the priests, as it would seem, made any provision for the excess caused by the addition of a day to the calendar every four years—an excess which it is necessary to correct by the occasional omission of the intercalary day; so that even the Sothic Year had a continual tendency to fall out of agreement with the actual revolution of the earth round the

* The *heliacal* rising of a star is when it emerges from the superior light of the sun, and thus becomes visible.

sun. The period of 1460 or 1461 years, during which the two computations—the Sothic and the Vague—were at issue with one another, was called the Sothic or Dog-star Cycle; and it is believed, but not actually known, that there was also a Tropical Cycle, at the end of which the Vague and Tropical Years coincided. This period consisted probably of about 1500 of the popular years;* but it is not easy to see how these several calculations could have been otherwise than confusing to the general comprehension. The Egyptian calendar, however, was of an extremely complex nature; for, in addition to the divisions of time already mentioned, we find two others, called the Phœnix Cycle and the Great Panegyrical Year.† The latter was a period of time, four of which made up 1461 Sothic years; the former was associated with a remarkable superstition, of which it will be proper to take some notice.

Herodotus, in describing the chief animals of Egypt, says:—"There is another sacred bird, called the phœnix, which I have never seen, except in a picture, for it seldom makes its appearance amongst them—only once in five hundred years, as the Heliopolitans affirm: they say that it comes on the death of its sire. If he is like the picture, he is of the following size and description: the plumage of his wings is partly golden-coloured and partly red; in outline and size he is very like an eagle. They say that he has the following contrivance, which, in my opinion, is not credible. They say that he comes from Arabia, and brings the body of his father to the Temple of the Sun, having enclosed him in myrrh, and there buries him in the temple. He brings him in this manner: first he moulds an egg of myrrh as large as he is able to carry; then he tries to carry it, and, when he has made the experiment, he hollows out the egg, and puts his parent into it, and stops up with some more myrrh the hole through which he had introduced the body, so that, when his father is put inside, the weight is the same as before: then, having covered it over, he carries it to the Temple of the Sun in Egypt. This, they say, is done by this bird."‡ Pliny the Elder, on the authority of an earlier writer, states that the revolution of the Great Year in Egypt agreed with the life of the phœnix, in correspondence with which the seasons and stars returned to their first places; beginning at noon on the day when the sun enters Aries. The return of the phœnix was fixed by various authors at different periods; some even going so far as 1461 years. It was said that the mysterious bird appeared in the age of Sesostris (otherwise Rameses the Great); in that of Amasis; and in the reign of Ptolemy III. The intervals here shown are very unequal, and great obscurity overhangs the whole question. That the fable had reference to the completion of a distinct period of time, as indicated by some condition of the heavenly bodies, is, however, highly probable; though it is doubtless also true that the phœnix (which is frequently represented in the paintings and sculptures of Egyptian temples) was symbolical of certain abstract ideas. By some it has been supposed that the allusion was to the periodical return of comets; but it is more likely that by the sole Arabian bird was meant a particular constellation, corresponding, perhaps, with that now called Cygnus, the heliacal rising of which, on the first day of the Vague Year, is thought to have marked the commencement of the Phœnix Cycle, equal in duration, it may be, with the Sothic Cycle and the Great Panegyrical Year. In that case, the same period of time was meant by all three expressions; but every such explanation depends much upon conjecture. Nevertheless, it is from these uncertain guesses that our ideas of Egyptian chronology, as applied to the sequence of historical events, are derived. The results share the doubtful character of the data on which they are based.

Egyptian history, in its primitive stages, is as obscure as that of all other ancient countries, though perhaps not more so. The people themselves—or, more strictly speaking, the priests—attributed their origin, together with that of the negroes, to the god Horus, while the Shemites and Europeans (the yellow and white races, as the two others were the red and black) were children of the goddess Pasht. The early rulers of Egypt, according to the popular belief, were all divinities, and the record of their actions is of course fabulous. An immense antiquity was alleged on behalf of their political state by the informants of Herodotus. They asserted that the regal government had at

* Article on "Egypt," by Mr. R. S. Poole, in Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible."

† It was customary in ancient Egypt for the people to hold, at stated periods, certain grand religious festivals, which were termed "Panegyrics." One of these was held at the termination of the Great Panegyrical Year, which was so called on that account.

‡ Herodotus, II. 73. Cary's Translation.—The notion of the phœnix rising again from its ashes, after consuming itself on a pyre of cassia, frankincense, and other spices, is of later date than the Father of History. In the early Christian ages, the existence of this bird was devoutly believed, and it was referred to by several of the Fathers, not only as a type, but as an actual proof of the Resurrection. Some degree of credence was given to the story even down to the middle of the seventeenth century.

that time lasted upwards of 11,000 years; but this was unquestionably a great exaggeration, and Manetho, writing after the Macedonian conquest, did not lay claim to more than thirty dynasties of human kings, extending over a period of about 5,000 years. The excess in the statement of Herodotus may have resulted from the priests having reckoned all the dynasties as following one another, whereas it is apparent from the monuments that several reigned contemporaneously. To what degree this was the case is not precisely known, and the obscurity of the early Egyptian annals is thus largely increased. English Egyptologists, however, have constructed a scheme of the first seventeen dynasties, with accompanying dates, from which it appears that in the early ages there were at one time two, at another three, at another five, and perhaps even six, parallel and independent kingdoms, existing simultaneously in different parts of the land. This state of things continued until near the close of the sixteenth century B.C., when Egypt was united into a single realm, of which the capital was Thebes.*

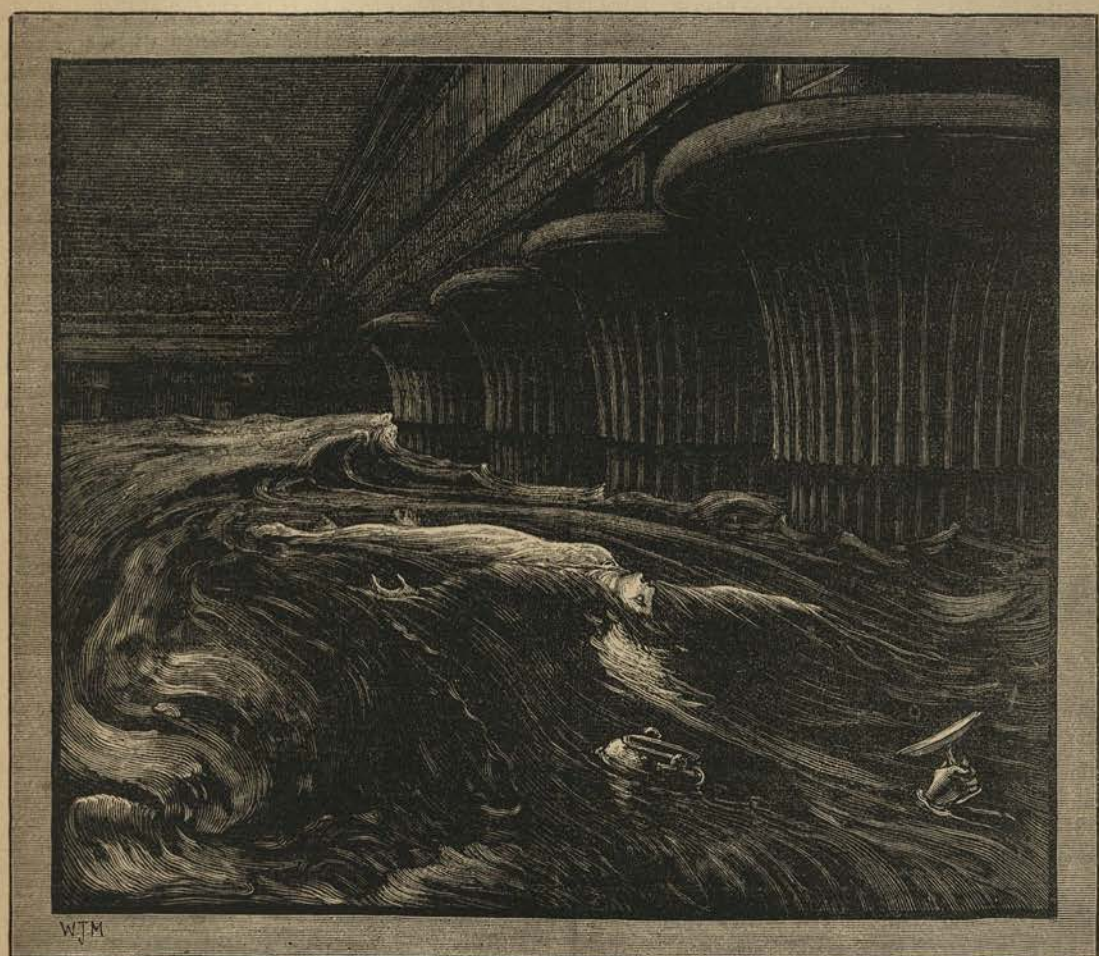
THE SPHINX.

According to Manetho, the earliest dynasty of mortals was preceded by a race of gods, demi-gods and other supernatural beings of a heroic character, who bore sway in Egypt for 25,900 years. The first of these divine rulers was Ptah, the Creator, who, being identified with the power of fire (the mysterious and radiant source of vitality), appears to be the same with the Greek Hephæstus and the

* Rawlinson's "Manual of Ancient History."

Roman Vulcan. Ptah was followed by Ra, the deity of the sun, the chief seat of whose worship was at On, or Heliopolis, in Lower Egypt. Next followed a being whom Manetho, writing in Greek, calls Agathodæmon, and who, according to Sir Gardner Wilkinson, was probably the hawk-headed god, Har-Hat, whose emblem was the winged globe placed over the doors and windows of Egyptian temples. The fourth ruler was Seb (Chronos or Saturn), the personification of Time, who, by his wife Netpe (Rhea), had five children, the lesser divinities by whom the world is more immediately governed. These were Osiris, Seth, Aroeris, Isis, and Nephthys. Seth was the Evil Principle, otherwise called Typho or Typhon; Aroeris (or the elder Horus) was perhaps Apollo; and Nephthys is sometimes identified with Aphrodite or Venus, though she may rather have been Vesta. The worship of Osiris and Isis, and the connection of those deities with the fabulous history of Egypt, are matters too important to be passed over with a mere hasty reference.

Plutarch, in his discourse on Isis and Osiris, relates that when the latter entered the world a voice was heard, saying, "The lord of all the earth is born." Having become king of Egypt, Osiris applied himself to the civilisation of his subjects by reclaiming them from their barbarous course of life, and teaching them to cultivate and improve the fruits of the soil. Having accomplished these reforms in his own country, he determined to spread the same principles of civilisation abroad, where they were equally needed. He had previously married his sister Isis (on account of which double relationship, the marriages of sisters with brothers were always regarded by the ancient Egyptians as



THE BANQUET OF NITOCRIS. (*See p. 76.*)

highly commendable); and, leaving the government of the kingdom to her, he set out, accompanied by his brother Aroeris, his sons Anubis and Macedo, and the god Pan. At the head of a large army, which was soon joined by a train of satyrs, he marched through Ethiopia, Arabia, India, Central Asia, Greece, and, indeed, all other parts of the world, everywhere inducing the people, by the influence of mild persuasion, to submit to his discipline. During this long absence, Typhon (Seth) conceived a treacherous design against his brother; but Isis, being extremely vigilant, was able to defeat all such projects. After the return of Osiris, however, Typhon persuaded seventy-two other persons to join him in a conspiracy; and having, by a stratagem, induced Osiris to enter a large chest, he sealed down the cover, and caused the whole to be thrown into the sea. The chest was carried by the waves to Byblos, on the coast of Phœnicia, but, after several years, was recovered by Isis, who, while conveying it to Egypt, set it down in a remote place while she paid a visit to her son, the younger Horus, who appears, like his father, to have many of the characteristics of Apollo. This led to a fresh misfortune; for Typhon, as he was one night hunting by the light of the moon, accidentally discovered the chest, and, rending the body into fourteen pieces, dispersed the fragments over different parts of the country. On hearing of the event, Isis began searching for the scattered members, using a boat made of papyrus for passing through the fenny lands in that portion of Egypt. Ultimately she succeeded in recovering all the parts but one, which had been devoured by fishes; and, having made many waxen statues to her husband's memory, in each of which she enclosed a piece of his body, she required of the priests that they should pay divine honours to the deceased monarch. Typhon, after three desperate battles with the younger Horus, was finally vanquished by the influence of Osiris, and put to death, or, at least, reduced to bondage. Such, in brief, is the account of Osiris and Isis given by Plutarch, Diodorus Siculus, and other Greek writers. On the whole it may fairly be said that these narratives, while differing in some details, are coherent in the main.

The fable has been explained in a purely physical sense, as expressing the inundation of the Nile, and the several operations of Nature in the country watered by that stream. But a cold scientific allegory could never have exercised the extraordinary influence which this myth obtained over the minds of the Egyptians. Herodotus observes that, although it was not customary for all the people to worship the same god, every one adored Osiris and Isis. The former was regarded as a manifestation of the Supreme Deity in a human form, and as the greatest of all the gods, superior, even to the eight chief gods, since he was an incarnation of the Divine Goodness. He was held in such profound veneration that by those initiated into the mysteries it was considered profanity to utter his name; and even Herodotus, though an alien, observes a peculiar reticence when speaking of him. The most awful oath that could be taken by an inhabitant of the Thebaid was, "By him that sleeps at Philæ," where the sepulchre of Osiris was made the object of solemn observances. In the land of shadows beyond the grave, he was the judge of the dead, and those who died received his name. It is evident, therefore, that the belief in Osiris and his sister-wife had a deep root in the religious convictions and spiritual instincts of the Egyptian people. Possibly there may, in very remote times, have been some singularly benevolent king, who created a certain pattern of nobleness which, in the course of ages, became exalted into an impersonation of the Divine Beneficence itself, though it was not the custom of the Egyptians to deify their heroes. But, however the myth may have originated, it acquired so great a hold over the popular imagination and affection that it is impossible to follow the history of ancient Egypt without paying regard to this impressive legend.

The Greeks sometimes identified Osiris with Dionysus, or Bacchus; and certainly the civilising mission attributed to the wine-god, when he conducted an expedition into India, bears a great resemblance to what is related of the Egyptian deity. But the latter has also been held to correspond with Pluto, Pan, and even Jupiter. The fable undoubtedly had a great influence on the Hellenes, and through them on the Romans. The Eleusinian Mysteries were derived from those of Osiris, and celebrated with the same secrecy and awful pomp. The worship of Isis also was spread abroad, and in the Roman Empire became a pretext and cover for so much licentiousness that it was frequently found necessary to forbid the rites. But, with the Egyptians, Isis was the kindly goddess of the earth, the universal mother, the female patron of fecundity. She has likewise been traced in the person of several Greek divinities, and, as the teacher of the art of cultivating corn, bears a certain resemblance to Ceres. Perhaps from their connection with agriculture, Osiris was often symbolised as an ox, and Isis as a cow; but in later ages the former was

regarded as the deity of the sun, and the latter of the moon. So, at least, Diodorus affirms; but Sir Gardner Wilkinson considers the statement to be erroneous. Apis, the sacred bull of Memphis, was worshipped as the representative of Osiris, and Isis was sometimes pictured with the head of a cow, or with the horns of that animal, though it was rather to Athor, the Egyptian Venus, that the cow was sacred. The Egyptians seem to have attributed to Isis a still more tremendous mystery than to Osiris. On one of her statues was the inscription, "I am all that has been, and that shall be; and no mortal has hitherto taken off my veil." The probability is, that in the mystical refinements of the priests she stood for the feminine part of Nature, as Osiris for the masculine—the two representing the receptive quality and the active power, from the union of which all things proceed. One of the titles of Isis was Muth, meaning "Mother;" another was Methuer—"a name," says Plutarch, "implying 'fulness and cause,' and denoting not only the fulness of matter of which the world consists, but also its intimate conjunction with the good, the pure, and the well-ordered principle." It may fairly be said that through the fable of Isis and Osiris the majesty and splendour of the universe not obscurely shone.

Typhon, who had usurped the regal power after the murder of Osiris, was succeeded by the younger Horus, and he, by a long array of divine rulers, ending with another Horus. We then come to the *First Dynasty* of mortals, headed by Menes, Men, or M'na, of whom Herodotus gives some particulars, having reference to the great public works which he is said to have executed. From this narrative it would appear that in his time all Egypt was a morass, excepting the district of Thebes; that he protected Memphis by a mound from the overflowing of the river; and that the course of the Nile was changed by his orders from the foot of the Libyan hills to the middle of the valley. But it is doubtful whether there is much historical truth in what is related of Menes, and the very name is suggestive of a mythical being, on account of its similarity to names borne by the traditional founders of other nations—the Indian Menu, the Lydian Manes, the Phrygian Manis, the Cretan Minos, the Etruscan Menerfa, and others. It is affirmed that Menes built the great temple of Ptah at Memphis; that he made conquests in Ethiopia, and was killed by a hippopotamus; and that his memory was held in detestation, because he had induced the Egyptians to abandon their earlier and simpler mode of life. All this is of questionable value as a chronicle of facts; but the very existence of such legends seems to indicate that Memphis was one of the early seats of Egyptian civilisation. The date of Menes is supposed to have been about 2,700 B.C.; but other epochs have been mentioned, and the whole subject is extremely obscure. Wonderful tales are told as to the exploits of these primitive kings, and they are said to have been of gigantic stature. The capital city of Menes was that which in the oldest records is called This, in the Thebaid or Middle Egypt, the site of what was afterwards entitled Abydos. At the same time, another dynasty was reigning at Memphis, from which it would appear that the traditions connecting Menes with that city are incorrect, though there may have been a connection between the First and Third Dynasties. From the name of their capital (This), the First and Second Dynasties are called Thinite. The successor to Menes, the founder of the First Dynasty, was his son Athothis, or Thoth, the Egyptian Æsculapius; after whom came six other kings, of whose reigns nothing is related which need here be reproduced. The *Second Dynasty* consisted of nine kings, and the tomb of the second of these, named Kœechus, or Ke-ke-ou, has been found near the Pyramids of Ghizeh. The *Third Dynasty* is that which reigned at Memphis, and in connection with which the names of nine monarchs are recorded in Manetho's list.

To the *Fourth Dynasty* are assigned eight Memphian kings, famous for their association with the Pyramids. The date of the establishment of this dynasty is given variously as B.C. 3209 (Bunsen), 2450 (Wilkinson), and 2440 (Poole); and its duration has been estimated at two hundred and forty, two hundred and ten, and one hundred and fifty-five years. It is at any rate probable that a powerful monarchy was established at Memphis as early as the middle of the twenty-fifth century B.C., and that the contemporary dynasties ruling in other places paid a certain fealty to the predominant race. The kings of this dynasty were — Soris (Shuré), who reigned twenty-nine years, according to Manetho, and built the northern Pyramid of Abou-Seir, on the blocks of which his name is visible; Suphis I. (Shufu), the Cheops of Herodotus, and the builder of the Great Pyramid; Suphis II. (Nou-Shufu), brother of the preceding, with whom he reigned conjointly for about sixty-three years; Mencheres (Men-ka-ré), the Mycerinus of Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus, and the builder of the Third Pyramid, which until recently contained his sarcophagus; Ratoises, who reigned twenty-five years; Bicheris, twenty-two years; Sebercheres, seven years; and Thamphthis, nine years. The probable

duration of this dynasty was about two hundred and twenty years.*. These monarchs were evidently very powerful and splendid sovereigns. They doubtless exercised considerable influence over their contemporaries in other parts of the land, and it is known that they held sway in the peninsula of Mount Sinai, where they worked copper-mines. Soris appears, from sculptures on some of the monuments, to have prevailed over certain enemies of Asiatic race; and his successors reigned with such undisputed authority as to be able to assure their subjects a condition of absolute peace. Suphis I., or Cheops, is said to have been arrogant towards the gods in his earlier years, but ultimately to have repented, and written the Sacred Book. It is not improbable that he assumed some position of antagonism towards the priests, and in this way acquired a character for impiety. He seems however, to have been a munificent and able ruler, and it is obvious that a large measure of civilisation existed in the Egypt of his time. By what successive stages this civilisation had been reached, we have no information; but, at the era of the Fourth Dynasty, art and science were far beyond their rudimentary stages. The builders of the Pyramids must have possessed a remarkable degree of mechanical, mathematical, and artistic skill. Writing had already been elaborated from the earlier hieroglyphic forms; and the drawing of human and animal figures, as we see them represented on the walls of the monuments, is often spirited and effective. The political system of the country, moreover, was not that of a primitive society. Egypt was parcelled out into divisions called *nomes*, each of which had its governor. The military and civil services were distinct, and the priests enjoyed a well-defined position, which they do not seem to have transgressed.

The *Fifth Dynasty* reigned at Elephantine, in Upper Egypt, contemporaneously with the Fourth at Memphis, and the Second at This. The number of kings has also been stated variously at nine, and thirty-one: the latter estimate, however, is the more probable, if the dynasty really lasted, as affirmed, for nearly six centuries. One of the sovereigns of this race was Shaf-ra or Khaf-ra, the Sephres of Manetho, and probably the Cephren mentioned by Herodotus and Diodorus as having built the Second Pyramid. Several names belonging to the Fifth Dynasty are found in the Memphian tombs, together with those of the Fourth; from which it is inferred that a family connection existed between the two. The *Sixth Dynasty* succeeded the Fourth at Memphis about 2200 B.C., and endured some hundred and fifty years. The last of these monarchs was a queen, alluded to in the celebrated papyrus of the Italian Government as Neet-akar-tee, which is said to mean the Victorious. This is the Nitocris of Herodotus, who mentions two queens of that name—one a Babylonian, the other an Egyptian. The succession of women to the throne had been legalised under the Second Dynasty, and the custom would seem to have spread thence to Memphis; but, as we have already observed, much greater regard was paid to women in the land of the Pharaohs than in Eastern countries generally. Of the Egyptian Nitocris, Herodotus relates that she signally avenged her brother, who had preceded her on the throne, and whom his subjects had murdered. The kingdom having been handed over to her, she formed a stratagem by which several of the principal Egyptians should be slain. Having caused an extensive apartment to be constructed underground, she invited to a grand banquet all whom she believed to have been chiefly concerned in the murder; and while they were feasting, she let in upon them the waters of the Nile through a concealed channel. She then, says Herodotus, threw herself into a chamber full of ashes, that she might escape the vengeance which would otherwise have fallen on her: an obscure intimation, which may perhaps mean that she in this way committed suicide. The name of Nitocris occurs again in the annals of the Twenty-sixth Dynasty, as borne by a female sovereign, who appears to have been contemporary with the Babylonian queen. Of the *Seventh* and *Eighth Dynasties* (also Memphian) scarcely anything is related.

Nineteen kings are assigned to the *Ninth Dynasty*, which was founded at Heracleopolis soon after 2200 B.C., and lasted, according to Manetho, four hundred and nine years. The *Tenth Dynasty* reigned at the same city, which is in Lower Egypt, south of Memphis. The monarchs of the *Eleventh Dynasty* founded the kingdom of Diospolis, or Thebes, about the year 2200 B.C.: under the *Twelfth Dynasty*, this kingdom acquired a power which ultimately produced important effects. The country had for some time been weakened by its division into numerous distinct kingdoms; and about the period when the Twelfth Dynasty succeeded at Thebes (2080 B.C., or a little later), a foreign race, called the Hyksos, or Shepherd Kings, invaded the land, and for several generations reigned in many parts of Egypt, and predominated in all. The name Hyksos is derived by Manetho from *Hyk*, a king, and *Sos*, a shep-

* Rawlinson's Manual of Ancient History.

herd. It is noteworthy that in the hieroglyphics *Hak* means king, and the very similar word *Huk* means captive. The Egyptians, in their pride of race, called all foreigners "captives," by way of contempt; so that they may have spoken of these intruders, even at the time of their domination, as "captive (that is, foreign) shepherds," rather than as "shepherd kings." Their power, nevertheless, was very great; and the *Thirteenth Dynasty*, reigning at Thebes, together with the *Fourteenth* (called Xoïtes, from their capital, Xoïs, in the mouth of the Delta), felt the pressure of these energetic monarchs. Of the two dynasties thus affected, the Thirteenth is thought to have begun about 1920 B.C., and the Fourteenth about 2080. The latter is described by Manetho as having counted seventy-six kings, who ruled for a hundred and eighty-four, or four hundred and eighty-four, years. The kingdom was small and not very important; but, though tributary, first to the Memphite sovereigns, and afterwards to the Shepherds, it was able, probably by reason of its situation among the marshes of the Delta, to maintain a species of independence, even against the foreign invaders of Egypt.

The Shepherd Kings form the *Fifteenth*, *Sixteenth*, and *Seventeenth* of the ancient Egyptian Dynasties. Their origin is one of the moot points of history. According to Manetho, they were Arabs; yet the same writer gives the appellation of "Phœnicians" to the first of their dynasties, and says that they took Memphis, and founded a city from which they conquered all Egypt. It appears that they expected an invasion from the Assyrians, and were therefore glad to form a camp on the further side of the Isthmus of Suez. Other writers have supposed that they were themselves Assyrians; and they have also been regarded as Scythians, Cushites from Asia, and Israelites. The last of these theories was long a favourite with speculative writers, but is now considered of little worth. The probability is that they were Arabians, though possibly Arabians who had for some time been settled in Phœnicia. In any case, they were a nomadic tribe, possessed of numerous flocks and herds, and thence called Shepherds, yet at the same time distinguished by warlike capabilities and habits. This would exactly answer to the character of the Arabs; but it is impossible to speak confidently on a subject with respect to which Manetho, notwithstanding his greater opportunities of information, was very much in the dark. Sir Gardner Wilkinson conceives that the Shepherds claimed a right to reign in Egypt in consequence of being connected by marriage with some of the native kings, or that they may have been called in by one of the inferior Egyptian princes who had been dispossessed of his throne; which would account for their having obtained part of Lower Egypt without fighting a battle, and for the assistance which they are said to have received from some of the Egyptians.* It is known that they were at one time on terms of amity with several of the native rulers; yet they governed with a rod of iron, and soon came to be hated by the people. Their religion was different from that of the Egyptians, and they showed their disrespect for the popular faith by razing the temples to the ground wherever their supremacy extended. They also slaughtered vast numbers of the men, and made slaves of the women and children.

Still, a large part of the country was held by native rulers, though their power was to some extent overshadowed by the strangers; and as long as the Twelfth Dynasty lasted (viz., from 2080 to 1920 B.C., so nearly as can be ascertained), the monarchs belonging to that group were much more mighty than the Shepherds. Their authority was acknowledged, not merely in the Thebaid, or territory of Thebes, but from the neighbourhood of Memphis and Heliopolis to the borders of Ethiopia. The Sinaitic peninsula, in the Red Sea, was held by them with a firm grasp, and they sent successful expeditions into Ethiopia and Arabia. The chief monarch of this dynasty was Osirtasen (or Sesertesen) I., otherwise called Sesonchôsis—a name which has been identified with that of Sesostris. There were three monarchs called Osirtasen, and it is possible that the achievements of all may have helped to form the legendary Sesostris, of whom we read so many wonderful details in Herodotus, Diodorus Siculus, and other ancient authors. From remains of numerous temples which he founded, it appears that the first Osirtasen ruled the whole of Egypt from the Delta to the Second Cataract, and that he extended his conquests into Ethiopia. Osirtasen II. and Osirtasen III. were also great conquerors, and the latter was even treated as a god by some of the kings belonging to the Eighteenth Dynasty. Manetho says that Sesostris was regarded by the Egyptians as "the greatest after Osiris;" but which of the Osirtasens is to be credited with this dignity, or whether, indeed, it does not more truly attach to a later conqueror, is a matter of considerable doubt. The third Osirtasen annexed a portion of Ethiopia, and established the Egyptian frontier at Semneh, between the Second and Third

* Appendix to Book II. of Rawlinson's Herodotus (chap. 8 of the Appendix).

Cataracts. In other and more peaceful ways, he seems to have been a benefactor to his country, and one of his titles was "the Good"—a designation not often applied to despotic princes. The first Phœnix Cycle commenced during the reign of this monarch, B.C. 1986.

As the semi-fabulous Sesostris is nominally identified with one of the Osirtasens, though it is more probable that the chief historic root of the legend is to be found in the career of Rameses the Great (of whom we shall have to speak further on), it will be advisable to introduce in this connection some account of one of the most remarkable figures in the history of antiquity—a figure of gigantic and heroical proportions, rising out of the twilight of long-vanished days.

Sesostris, according to Manetho, was the third king of the Twelfth Dynasty. It is impossible to fix the exact date of his reign; and in truth it is but reasonable to believe that he is a species of ideal centre, round which have gathered the exploits of many martial sovereigns. Herodotus tells us that the father of Sesostris caused all the male children born in Egypt on the same day to be educated with his son, and to receive a military training, so that they might be attached to their king, and capable of enduring with him the hardships of the severest campaigns. During the lifetime of his parent, the prince led an expedition into Arabia, which he subdued. He then invaded the countries west of Egypt, and acquired the greater part of Libya. On the death of his father, the new king made preparations for an enterprise of the most enormous dimensions. A prophecy had been uttered, to the effect that he was to become master of the whole inhabited earth. This he determined to realise; but, before setting out, he secured his power at home by the institution of wise reforms. The army with which he ultimately started consisted of 600,000 foot, 24,000 horse, and 27,000 beasts of burden; and the command of the subdivisions was given to those warriors who had been educated with the king, and who numbered more than 1,700. It is said that Sesostris divided the country into equal parts, so as to give every Egyptian a share; but to these companions-in-arms were assigned the best portions. Having conquered the Ethiopians, who were compelled to yield an annual tribute in gold, ebony, and ivory, the king despatched a fleet of four hundred long ships (the first of the kind built in Egypt) to conduct explorations in various parts of the world. These vessels sailed down the Red Sea, and followed the coasts of Asia as far as India. In the meanwhile, Sesostris himself traversed the land, subduing nation after nation, and carrying his authority even to the shores of the Eastern Ocean. Returning in a north-westerly direction, he reached the banks of the Tanais, in Scythia—a river (now called the Don) which falls into the Palus Mæotis, or Sea of Azof. Thence he made his way into Thrace; but here such serious difficulties were encountered, from failure of provisions, and the rugged nature of the country, that it was considered necessary to retire. The expedition had by this time lasted nine years, and it was with a vast train of prisoners and an enormous amount of spoil that the king returned to Egypt. Wherever his armies had been, he erected columns, with inscriptions recording his achievements. Sometimes he set up statues of himself; and two figures of this monarch, together with an inscribed pillar, existed in the time of Herodotus.

On arriving at Pelusium, in the Delta, the victorious sovereign, together with his wife and children, narrowly escaped assassination at the hands of a treacherous brother, who had been ruling Egypt in his absence, and disliked the prospect of surrendering his power. Two of the royal children were, indeed, burnt in a fire which had been kindled in the tent of Sesostris (Herodotus says that, by the advice of the mother, they were laid upon the fire, so as to make a bridge across the flames, by which the others could escape); but the king revenged himself on the offender, and, after rewarding his followers, adorned the temples of the gods with magnificent presents. He then proceeded to erect fresh temples in all the cities of Egypt, dedicating each of them to the greatest local divinity, and employing in the execution of the work the prisoners of war whom he had made captive in various parts of the world. The labour was severe, and the hardships endured by the wretched foreigners were so extreme that the Babylonians rose in insurrection, and, seizing a fortified position on the Nile, carried on war with the Egyptians. The vigour of their resistance seems to have inspired Sesostris with a feeling of respect: he pardoned the rebels, and even granted them, as a settlement, the place which they held, and which thenceforward they entitled Babylon. Ancient authors give many particulars of the vast public works executed by this monarch. The superfluous waters of the Nile were carried off by canals; various cities were encircled by high mounds, to shut out the inundations of the river; and, as a protection against the Syrians and Arabs—whom, notwithstanding his victories, Sesostris appears to have had some reason to dread—a wall, fifteen hundred stadia in length, was built from Pelusium to beyond Heliopolis. The great

Egyptian conqueror preserved his power to the last. Surrounded by all the pomp of an Oriental monarch, and periodically receiving the homage of subject kings and princes, with whom he passed in triumph through the land, he reigned for a period of thirty-three years according to some writers, of sixty-six according to Manetho, and then, being seized with blindness, put an end to his existence.*

THE RUINS AT DENDERAH.

A certain resemblance in his story to that of Osiris will be observed by the reader.

Returning to the undoubted kings of the Twelfth Dynasty, we find considerable glory and renown gathered about the name of Amenemha III. He is supposed to be the Maris, Lamaris, or Labaris of Manetho, and the Mœris of Herodotus; though it must be added that the Greeks seem to have given the name of Mœris to several kings. The third Amenemha was concerned in building, near the City of Crocodiles (afterwards Arsinoë), a marvellous structure called the Labyrinth. Herodotus, who saw this edifice when he was in Egypt, observes that the art exhibited in its design and execution were beyond description. The names of various monarchs are mentioned in connection with the Labyrinth, and Herodotus says that it was erected by twelve kings who reigned in Egypt simultaneously, and who determined to leave a common memorial of themselves. The situation of this monument was a little above Lake Mœris—not, however, the natural lake of that name, but one which was artificially constructed, and which consisted of an extensive reservoir, secured by dams, from which the water was conveyed by channels to various parts of the province. The latter was no longer used even in Pliny's time, and the ground has long formed part of the cultivated plain of the Fayoum.

The vast size and extraordinary magnificence of the Labyrinth may be judged from the remark of Herodotus, that all the great works of the Greeks

* The chief sources of information with regard to Sesostris are to be found in the Second Book of Herodotus, and the First Book of Diodorus Siculus.

put together would not equal it, either for labour or expense. He adds that it even surpassed the Pyramids. According to this account, it had twelve courts, all of them roofed; with six gates looking to the north, and six to the south; and with a wall surrounding the entire building. The number of chambers was three thousand, half of which were under ground. In these subterranean apartments were the sepulchres of the kings who built the Labyrinth, and those of the sacred crocodiles. The Greek stranger was not permitted to enter them, on account of their holy character. "Thus," says Herodotus,* "it is from hearsay only that I can speak of the lower chambers. The upper chambers, however, I saw with my own eyes, and found them to excel all other human productions; for the passages through the houses, and the varied windings of the paths across the courts, excited in me infinite admiration as I passed from the courts into chambers, and from the chambers into colonnades, and from the colonnades into fresh houses, and again from these into courts unseen before." The walls were covered with sculptured figures; the colonnades were built of white stones, exquisitely fitted together; and the roof also was of stone. At the corner of the Labyrinth stood a pyramid, two hundred and sixty-one feet high, with large figures engraved on it, and entered from a subterranean passage. The halls would appear to have been vaulted, and, according to some authors, the opening and shutting of the doors produced a noise like the reverberations of thunder. A few remains of this vast edifice are still to be seen, and the exact size and plan were ascertained by the Prussian commission which examined the ground in 1843. The oldest name found there was that of Amenemha III.; but it is probable that several other kings contributed to the structure.

While these great works were being executed by the Theban rulers of the Twelfth Dynasty, the Shepherd Kings were adding nothing whatever to the monuments of Egypt. In many respects they promoted the well-being of the country, notwithstanding the tyranny with which they treated the religious convictions of the people; but they were a race of conquering soldiers, and seem to have cared little for art. The first king of the Fifteenth Dynasty (which was the first dynasty of the Shepherds) was called Salatis or Saites. He ruled at Memphis, and acquired considerable renown as a martial sovereign. Nevertheless, the monarchs of this race have left few records of themselves, and for a period of nearly three hundred years the very names of the alien kings are unknown. Their power increased considerably during the period of the Thirteenth (Theban) Dynasty, the monarchs of which appear to have been feeble and pacific. Unable to withstand the attacks of the Shepherd Kings, the degenerate successors of the Osirtasens fled into Ethiopia, from which, after a time, they probably returned, and assumed, together with most other Egyptian monarchs, the position of tributaries to the foreign race. The complete establishment of the authority of the Shepherds is assigned to about the year 1900 B.C.; but the Memphian rulers of the Seventh and Eighth Dynasties recovered some degree of power subsequently to this. When the sovereigns of the Thirteenth Dynasty abandoned Thebes, the Shepherd Kings signalised their triumph by throwing down the monuments of the great princes who had preceded them. It was acts such as these which made the memory of the Hyksos so abominable to the native Egyptians in all succeeding ages, although the strangers had in some respects contributed to the glory and prosperity of the land. The length of time they held sway in Egypt is variously stated at five hundred and eleven, and six hundred and twenty-five, years. According to some authorities, however, the three dynasties lasted from about 2080 to 1525 B.C.—a period of five hundred and fifty-five years; but all such dates are conjectural. The visit of Abram to Egypt is believed by some to have taken place during the reign of Salatis or Saites, the first of the Shepherd Kings; and it was probably under the same dynasty that Joseph entered the land of the Pharaohs—an episode of Egyptian history which we must now proceed to relate.

* Book II., chap. 148.

CHAPTER VII.

EGYPT AND ISRAEL.

Patriarchal Society among the Israelites—Jacob and his Sons—Act of Treachery towards Hamor and Shechem—The Pharaohs of the Old Testament—Joseph's Entry into Egypt—Measures adopted by Joseph on becoming the King's Chief Minister—Settlement of Jacob and his People in the Land of Goshen—Death of Joseph—Persecution of the Israelites—Antagonistic Theories as to the Identity and Date of the Pharaoh of the Persecution—Birth of Moses—Popular Traditions with regard to Moses—Relations of Moses towards the Jewish People—Condition of the Hebrew Tribes in Egypt—The Exodus: Conflicting Views as to Date, &c.—Singular Narrative of Manetho—Allusions to Moses in various Greek Writers—The Pentateuch and its Authorship—Benevolence of the Ancient Egyptians—Route of the Israelites towards the Red Sea—The City of Raamses, or Rameses.

A KIND of patriarchal government had been created by the Israelites in the Land of Canaan, and they fed their flocks, or moved their tents about from place to place, much as the Arabs do at the present day, without seeking to establish any elaborate social state or dominant political power; though, in their encounters with the Amorites and other neighbouring tribes, they showed no lack of military aptitude and courage. Jacob had a number of sons, who were not very well affected towards one another. Joseph was the child of his old age, the son of his best-loved wife, Rachel; and he became the object of an amount of favour which irritated the others. In particular, Jacob made him a coat, called in the Bible a coat of many colours, and this increased the jealousy of his brethren.* Some time before this, two of Joseph's brothers had been engaged in a transaction which sufficiently reveals their character. Their sister Dinah had been outraged by Shechem, the son of Hamor, a Hivite prince. Shechem nevertheless exhibited a real affection for the damsel, whom he offered to marry; and at the same time Hamor made very generous proposals of alliance to Jacob. The sons of the patriarch deceitfully agreed to accept these proposals, on condition that all of Hamor's male subjects should be circumcised; but when the terms had been fulfilled, two of Joseph's brethren, named Simeon and Levi, who appear to have acted with the concurrence of the others, fell upon the city of Hamor, and (as the narrative sets forth) slew all the males, including the prince and his son, and departed, taking Dinah with them. Jacob, on hearing of the fact, expressed displeasure at what had been accomplished—not, however, because an execrable crime had been committed, but because the Canaanites, the Perizzites, and others, would combine against him, and his people, being few in number, would be overpowered. He therefore removed to Bethel (which is interpreted as meaning "the House of God"), and a second time received the blessing and special countenance of Jehovah, to whom he had built an altar, after persuading his household to put away their strange gods.†

Those who had been actively engaged in the murder of Hamor and his people, and those who had been privy to the deed, were not likely to hesitate in any act of treachery against one of themselves who had incurred the enmity of the rest. Joseph was hated by the other sons of Jacob, and they resolved to kill him, Reuben being the only dissentient. Instead of this, however, they threw him into a pit in the field where they were keeping their flocks, having first stripped off the coat which had been one of the causes of so much heart-burning. They then sold him to a band of Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. By these Ishmaelites he was resold in Egypt to one Potiphar, who is described in the Book of Genesis as an officer of Pharaoh, and who seems to have been the captain of the guard, or chief of the executioners.

It should be here explained that Pharaoh is the common appellation of the kings of Egypt mentioned in the Old Testament. Though used as a proper name in the Bible, it was really a title of office, the root of which is to be found in the "P-ra" or "Ph-ra" of the hieroglyphics. The literal meaning of the word is "the Sun;" but, in accordance with the Oriental custom of hyperbolical laudation where princes are concerned, the Egyptian king was described by the same word as the celestial luminary. Ten Pharaohs are mentioned in the Bible, the first of whom was the Pharaoh of Abram, and the second the Pharaoh of Joseph. The identity of the latter has led to much specula-

* It is generally believed that this was a long tunic with sleeves worn by youths and maidens of the richer class; and that the intention of it was to indicate that Joseph was to be looked on as of a higher grade than his brethren, and exempt from manual labour.

† Genesis, xxxiv. and xxxv.

tion, unattended (as usually is the case in these matters) by any certain result. Baron Bunsen supposed that he was Osirtasen (or Sesertesen) I., the leading monarch of the Twelfth Dynasty—one of the kings who is believed to have been the same as Sesostris, and the commencement of whose reign is referred to about 2020 B.C. In the opinion of Mr. Reginald Stuart Poole, he was the Shepherd King Apophis, belonging to the Fifteenth Dynasty, and bearing sway in the nineteenth century B.C. His arguments are characterised by great force; yet it cannot be said that we know anything positive as to the period of Joseph's entry into Egypt. The accepted date in the English Bibles is 1729 B.C.; but other years have been mentioned.

Joseph, by his skill in the interpretation of dreams, was recommended to the favour of Pharaoh, after having been long confined in prison, by order of Potiphar, on a false charge which the wife of that officer had brought against him. The celebrated dream of Pharaoh, in which the seven lean kine that came up out of the Nile devoured the seven fat kine that had preceded them, was construed as meaning that seven years of plenty would be succeeded by an equal period of dearth; and Joseph advised that, as a measure of precaution, persons should be appointed to collect the surplus corn during the time of plenty, and lay it up in storehouses against the days of famine. The general direction of this plan was given by the king to Joseph himself, who received extraordinary honours and rewards; and throughout the dominions of Pharaoh received a degree of respect inferior only to that paid to the king. The famine proved to be long and grievous; but for a while Egypt was able, not merely to feed herself, but to supply other nations. The proceedings of Joseph,

MASSACRE OF THE HIVITES BY SIMEON AND LEVI.

though efficacious, were, perhaps of necessity, of an arbitrary character. After having taken from the cultivators of the soil a fifth part of their wheat-crops during the years of plenty,* he sold the store thus accumulated to the famine-stricken people. In this way, all the money of the Egyptians came into Joseph's possession; and subsequently all the cattle; and finally all the land, excepting that of the priests. The commonalty of Egypt, who had formerly enjoyed a position of much independence, were thus reduced to a state of serfdom. Joseph, however, demanded for Pharaoh only a fifth part

* It is very doubtful whether he did not take the whole. The statements in verses 34, 35, and 48 of the forty-first chapter of Genesis are ambiguous.

of the crops which might in future be reared, and for which, when the people were reduced to the verge of desperation, he furnished a supply of seed. Some confirmation of this narrative is supposed to be discoverable in the statement of Herodotus that Sesostris "made a division of the soil of Egypt among the inhabitants, assigning square plots of ground of equal size to all, and obtaining his chief revenue from the rent which the holders were required to pay him every year." But it is uncertain what king was really meant by Herodotus when he spoke of Sesostris; and in any case it does not seem likely that the monarch alluded to was the Pharaoh of Joseph's days. Famine, whenever it occurred in Egypt, was probably met by measures of special applicability. A widespread dearth, of great duration, is mentioned in an inscription on the walls of a tomb at Beni-Hassan, in Upper Egypt; but there is nothing in it that can be adduced to show that this was the affliction described in Genesis.

One of the great objects of Joseph was to establish a paternal despotism in the land of his adoption, where the power of the kings had up to that time been circumscribed. By getting the whole resources of the population into his own hands, he was enabled to impose whatever terms he pleased, as the miserable Egyptians would naturally fear being starved if they refused compliance. He removed the agricultural population into cities from one end of Egypt to the other: partly, no doubt, to facilitate the distribution of corn; partly also, it would seem, in order that a greater control might be exercised over them in a political sense. If, as Mr. Poole supposes, this was done under the Shepherd Kings, it was probably among the causes of the extreme dislike with which the memory of those foreign sovereigns was always held by the aborigines. Another reason influencing Joseph was the desire to form an Israelitish colony in the vicinity of the Nile. After he had revealed himself to his brethren, who had come to Egypt to purchase corn, he persuaded his father and the whole of his family to settle in the dominions of Pharaoh; with which arrangement the king is said to have been well satisfied. The territory set apart for them was the Land of Goshen—a province in the extreme north-east of Egypt (if, indeed, it can be strictly regarded as Egypt at all), close to the Isthmus of Suez. The general nature of the country was pastoral, and Pharaoh kept his cattle there. Peopled by a mixed race, partly Egyptian and partly alien, Goshen was well fitted for the reception of the Israelites, who settled there in large numbers, and in a little while multiplied greatly. It was here that the countrymen of Joseph dwelt during their whole sojourn in the country of Mizraim. According to the received Biblical chronology, the entry of Joseph into Egypt was in the year 1729 B.C.; the settlement of Jacob and his tribe, in 1706. Mr. Poole assigns the first of these events to 1876 B.C., and the second to 1867. But this lapse of only nine years does not correspond with the greater length of time indicated in the Bible by the references to Joseph's age at various periods.

For a considerable period the Israelites seem to have lived peaceably and prosperously under the rule of the Pharaohs; but in time their increasing numbers excited the jealousy of the Egyptians. Joseph died, according to the Biblical chronology of Archbishop Ussher, in 1635 B.C.; and at some later period, not capable of being exactly fixed, the reigning king saw that his Hebrew subjects were becoming more and mightier than the aboriginal race. He resolved to take measures against them, and the means he adopted were in one respect similar to those which Joseph himself had used against the Egyptians. The strangers were reduced to a state of vassalage. They were treated, however, with a degree of rigour such as Joseph had never exercised. Sir Gardner Wilkinson, who placed the Israelitish sojourn under the Sixteenth, Seventeenth, and Eighteenth Dynasties, conceived that during the two first of those lines the Jews were well treated, and obtained a grant of land, on condition of service being performed by them and their descendants; but that when the Memphites of the Seventeenth Dynasty were succeeded by the Thebans of the Eighteenth, the grant was rescinded, while the service was still required, and soon became severe. Taskmasters were set over the unhappy Israelites, and they were compelled to labour on great public works—in the erection of cities, the making of bricks and mortar, and other exhausting toils. The account in the first chapter of Exodus goes further, and says that Pharaoh ordered the destruction of all the newly-born male infants of the race of Israel, while the female infants were to be spared; but it is added that the command was disobeyed. The identity of this Pharaoh is equally obscure with that of the Pharaoh who befriended Joseph. It is generally supposed that he was a king of the Eighteenth or Nineteenth Dynasty; but by Mr. Poole he is placed much earlier. From a passage in Isaiah (lii. 4), it would seem that the oppressor of the Israelites in Egypt was an Assyrian; but the passage is not so clear as to be beyond question.

It was during this persecution that one of the

greatest lawgivers of the world was born. Among the Israelites of Goshen was a man named Amram, of the tribe of Levi (the co-author with Simeon of the massacre at the city of Hamor); and the wife of Amram—his aunt Jochebed—gave birth to a son after Pharaoh had issued an edict that all the male children of Israel should be cast into the river. This was Moses, who, according to Manetho, was born at Heliopolis. The year of his nativity is generally regarded as 1571 B.C.; but here again the reader must be warned that all such statements are in the highest degree doubtful. The Bible narrative tells us how he was exposed by his mother in an ark of rushes on the Nile, in the hope that he might in this way be saved, and of his being taken out by Pharaoh's daughter. Although still associating with his own people (for the nurse into whose charge he was given proved to be his mother), it is probable that his education was at the Egyptian court, since he passed as the princess's son. The name bestowed on him is, in Hebrew, *Mosheh*, from *Mashah*, "to draw out"—because he was drawn out of the water. But the Hebrew word is apparently derived from an Egyptian root, seeing that the boy's name was bestowed, not by his parents, or by any of that nationality, but by the daughter of Pharaoh. In the Coptic tongue, which succeeded to the ancient Egyptian, *Mo* signifies water, and *Ushe* saved; and this seems to be the true explanation of the name.

Josephus, who in his work on the antiquities of his race has preserved many of the popular traditions concerning Moses, relates that the beauty of the child was wonderful, and that people on the highways stood gazing after him with astonishment. He was educated in the sacred lore of the Egyptians, Chaldees, and Assyrians; and Manetho states that, under the Egyptian name of Osarsiph (from Osiris), he served as a priest at Heliopolis, the City of the Sun. This account of his early life is of course apocryphal; but it has an appearance of truth, and fills up what would otherwise be a void. Several of the legends about Moses, however, are so manifestly fabulous that it would answer no purpose to repeat them here. Nevertheless, it is curious to note a statement made by the Greek-Egyptian writer, Apion (who professed to derive his information from the ancient men of the country), to the effect that Moses, when acting as a priest at Heliopolis, offered up his prayers, according to the custom of his fathers, outside the walls of the city, in the open air, with his face towards the rising sun. In his reply to Apion, Josephus denies the truth of this assertion; yet it seems not at all incredible. It is at least quite as probable as that Moses, in his early years, was a great conqueror, and subjugated Ethiopia, as Josephus himself asserts.* Leaving these traditions on one side, we find, according to the narrative in Exodus, that

ISRAELITES AND THEIR TASKMASTERS.

* "Antiquities of the Jews," Book II., chap. 10.—In Numbers, xii. 1, it is mentioned that Moses had an Ethiopian wife. Josephus says that this wife was Tharbis, the daughter of the King of Ethiopia, whom Moses had vanquished.

Moses one day interposed between an Egyptian and an Israelite who was being roughly used. Having first assured himself that no one was in sight, Moses slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand, but afterwards, fearing that the act had been discovered, fled into Midian—probably the peninsula of Sinai, which runs southward from the Isthmus of Suez into the Red Sea, and which was then, as it is still, peopled by Arabs. There he was received with kindness and hospitality by Reuel, or Jethro, a Midianite priest or prince, who gave him his daughter Zipporah in marriage. He had previously been regarded as an Egyptian; he now, by adoption, became an Arabian. A later tradition, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles (vii. 30), states that he remained with his father-in-law forty years, and that he was full forty when he fled from Egypt; so that, according to this, he must have been at least eighty before the really important part of his life began. His duties were those of a herdsman, keeping the flocks of his father-in-law, in the desert at the foot of Horeb, "the Mount of God"—a place which it is probable the Arabians themselves regarded as sacred. But he was ultimately to enter on a career which should end in the deliverance of his people; and for such an enterprise he was prepared by years of solitary musing in the loneliness of grassy plains, under mountains of austere and awful grandeur.

The supernatural events connected with the commission which devolved on Moses, and which was delivered to him on Mount Horeb, are well known to every student of the Bible. It will here be sufficient to say that Moses returned to Egypt, and associated his brother Aaron with himself in the difficult task which he had to perform, and to which he had shown the utmost disinclination, alleging amongst other things that he was slow of speech. Aaron seems to have been an eloquent man, and he was apparently of great service in persuading the Israelites to accept the leadership of Moses. The Hebrews in Egypt were divided into twelve tribes, each governed, so far as there can have been any independent rule under an oppressive despotism, by a patriarchal chief. How long their bondage had now lasted, it is impossible to say with any precision. But it must have been several years; and even previous to the persecution the strangers had grown into something like a separate nation. Their numbers may have been increased by captives of Semitic origin who had at various times been brought into Egypt, as well as by native Egyptians who voluntarily joined them, or were condemned to an equal servitude. Occasional intermarriages with the women of the country may likewise have occurred; so that by the period of the Exodus the original Hebrew blood was probably qualified to some extent by a Hamitic or Turanian element. It may also be that a tendency to idolatrous superstition had arisen among these Israelite settlers, as the result of long contact with a people who, together with many virtues and many noble religious intuitions, had too great a disposition to convert their faith into a species of demonology.

Having first won over their countrymen to acquiescence in the great design—which was nothing less than to transport the whole of the tribes to their former seat in the Land of Canaan—Moses and Aaron required of Pharaoh that the people of Israel might be permitted to go into the wilderness, for the purpose of holding a religious festival. The request was denied, and the tasks of the Israelites were made more heavy and difficult, as a punishment for what was regarded as an excuse for idleness. The Pharaoh under whom the strangers were now living was not the same monarch who had commenced the persecution, but one of his successors—a ruler equally despotic and equally relentless. He refused the repeated demands of Moses to let the people of Israel depart; and the relation in the Pentateuch tells us how he and his people were punished by a series of miraculous afflictions, which are known as the Ten Plagues of Egypt. At length he permitted, or rather urged, the Hebrews to quit his territory, but, while they were making their way towards the Red Sea, resumed his implacable mood, and sent an army after them. The fate of that army, and the passage of the Israelites over the intervening channel to the eastern shore, are among the most conspicuous incidents of the Old Testament, and have already been related in the Introduction to this work.

The Exodus took place during the night following the fourteenth day of the lunar month nearest to the vernal equinox. The name of this month was Abib or Nisan, and from the period of the Exodus it was regarded as the first of the Hebrew ecclesiastical year. According to the Biblical chronology of Archbishop Ussher, the departure of the Israelites from Egypt occurred in the year 1491 B.C. Poole places it in 1652; Hales in 1648; Clinton in 1625; Jackson in 1593; Petavius in 1531; and Bunsen in 1320. The subject is full of perplexities, one of the chief of which results from the endeavours of theologians to reconcile the statement of Jehovah to Abram (Genesis, xv. 13)—that his posterity should be afflicted in a strange land for four hundred years—with the

circumstance, generally admitted, that the Egyptian sojourn was no longer than two hundred and fifteen years (not half of which in all probability were years of affliction in any sense), and the fact that Moses (as appears in Exodus, xii. 40, 41) gives the same period at four hundred and thirty years to a day. The argument that the four hundred or the four hundred and thirty years should be understood as including the whole time from the Promise to the Exodus, and therefore the first stay in Canaan, as well as the stay in Egypt, will not bear examination; because it is expressly stated in the prophecy of the affliction that it was to be for four hundred years in a land that was not the land of the chosen people—an expression which could not apply to the Land of Canaan, where Abram then was, as that had been given to his race for their own. Many writers, however, have been greatly troubled by the short period of two hundred and fifteen years as that of the entire residence of the Israelites in the land of the Nile, because of the immense increase in their numbers which had taken place during the interval. At the entrance of Jacob into Egypt, the number seems to have been not much over seventy (Genesis, xlvi. 8—27); at the date of the departure—only four generations later, reckoning from Levi to Moses—it was about 600,000, counting men alone (Exodus, xii. 37), which is thought to give a total, including the women and children, of some two millions and a half. In the way of natural reproduction, this is impossible; but, as we have already observed, there had doubtless been a foreign admixture. Moreover, a multitude of strangers accompanied the Israelites on their departure.*

A Rabbinical tradition preserved by the Jews fixes the Exodus in the year of the world 2447, which is equivalent to 1314 B.C.; but the Jewish chronology is not commonly regarded by European scholars as possessing much value. Nevertheless, the date thus deduced falls within the reign of Men-ptah, or Ptah-men, a monarch belonging to the Nineteenth Dynasty, whom Bunsen, Lepsius, and some other German inquirers, regard as the Pharaoh of the Exodus. The same opinion was at one time held by the late Sir Gardner Wilkinson; but, instead of placing the reign of Men-ptah within the years 1328 and 1309 B.C., as others had done, he brought it down as late as 1245. In the last edition of his work on the Ancient Egyptians, however, the flight of Moses from Egypt is assigned to the second year of Thothmes I. (1531 B.C.), and the Exodus to the reign of Thothmes III. (1491 B.C.), as Archbishop Ussher supposed.† Lepsius maintained that the Israelites entered Egypt under the Eighteenth Dynasty, and left it under the Nineteenth; while Bunsen believed that they came in under the Twelfth Dynasty, and stayed there no fewer than 1434 years. Manetho, according to Julius Africanus, states that Moses quitted Egypt under the first king of the Eighteenth Dynasty, whose name was Amos, or Amosis—by Josephus described as Tethmosis. The Armenian version of the "Chronicon" of Eusebius says that the Exodus was during the reign of Achencheres, the ninth king of the same dynasty; while some have maintained that not merely the entrance into Egypt, but even the Exodus, took place before the Shepherd invasion. One remarkable circumstance in connection with the story is that not the slightest allusion to it has ever been discovered in any of the Egyptian monuments or inscriptions. It is true that primitive nations do not chronicle their own reverses and misfortunes, and it was therefore hardly to be expected that the incidents attending the departure of the Israelites from Egypt would be recorded by the discomfited race. But one would naturally look for some reference to the prolonged sojourn of the Hebrew strangers—to the friendship of the earlier Pharaoh for Joseph, to the arrival of Jacob and his people, and to the settlement in the Land of Goshen. That there is no such reference, Mr. Poole accounts for by the fact that we have scarcely any monuments of the period to which the Shepherd Kings belong. But this argument depends for its value on the accuracy of the assumption that the Hebrew sojourning in Egypt is connected with the period of the foreign dynasties—an assumption which has never been proved as against many rival theories, though the reasons in its favour are not inconsiderable. Besides, it is incorrect to say that we have scarcely any monuments of the Shepherd epoch. They are to be found in several parts of Egypt.‡

Manetho, who wrote at the beginning of the third century before Christ, gives a strange account of Moses, which Josephus, while indignantly

* Exodus, xii. 38.

† "Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians," by Sir J. Gardner Wilkinson, D.C.L., &c. New Edition, revised and corrected by Samuel Birch, LL.D., D.C.L., Keeper of the Egyptian and Oriental Antiquities in the British Museum, &c. (1878.)—Wilkinson's other opinion is contained in an Appendix to Book II. of Rawlinson's Herodotus.

‡ Dr. Samuel Birch, in his edition of Sir Gardner Wilkinson's "Ancient Egyptians" (1878), speaks of their being found at Tanis, in the north, and as far south as the Fayoum. (Vol. I., pp. 15, 16.)

repudiating its truthfulness, has preserved in his reply to Apion.* From this story it would appear that a certain Egyptian king, named Amenophis (the Men-ptah of the monuments), was desirous of propitiating the gods, and that he communicated his wish to a namesake distinguished by peculiar holiness and wisdom, who told him that he might effect his purpose by clearing the whole country of lepers and other impure people. He therefore brought together all who had any physical defects, to the number of 80,000, and despatched them to quarries on the east side of the Nile, that they might labour there, and so be divided from the rest of the Egyptians. After they had continued in that miserable condition a long while, the king set apart for their habitation the city of Avaris, or Pelusium (in the northern part of the Land of Goshen), from which the Shepherds had recently been expelled. Finding themselves firmly established here, the proscribed people chose a ruler out of some priests of Heliopolis who had been included among the impure. The name of this priest was Osarsiph, and, being himself an apostate, he imposed a law upon his followers, that they should neither worship the Egyptian gods, nor abstain from any of the sacred animals. His next design was to make war upon the king; to accomplish which, he trained the people to arms, fortified the city, and called in as his allies the Shepherds who had formerly been dispossessed.† At the head of 200,000 men, Osarsiph (whom we are to regard as Moses) advanced against Avaris. Amenophis equipped an army of 300,000 veteran soldiers, yet refrained from joining battle with his enemies, from fear of a prophecy foreshadowing a great misfortune if he should offer any violence to the priests. He accordingly fled into Ethiopia with all his host, and was kindly received by the sovereign of that country. During his absence, the Shepherds, who are described by Manetho as coming from Jerusalem (which was probably not then built), and as being the same with the Jews, acted towards the loyal Egyptians with the most execrable cruelty; burning the cities and villages, destroying the images of the gods, compelling the priests to be the executioners of the sacred animals, and afterwards driving them out of the country. At the termination of the thirteen years to which the prophecy of evil was limited, Amenophis returned from Ethiopia with a great army, accompanied by his son Rhampses, in command of another army, by whom the Shepherds and the polluted people were utterly routed, and pursued to the borders of Syria. This narrative is to some extent impugned by the fact that the monumental annals of the reign of Men-ptah, which extended over nineteen years, make no mention of his having been absent from his kingdom thirteen of those years. Besides, Manetho himself, according to Josephus, admitted that the story was not from the Egyptian records, but from some narrative of uncertain authorship. Still, it must be recollected that we have not Manetho's own text, but are dependent in this respect on the representations of an adversary.

Allusions to Moses are to be found in numerous Greek writers, who, however, wrote at a much later period than the events to which they refer. Diodorus Siculus has preserved a narrative originally composed by one Hecatæus of Abdera, who visited Egypt under Ptolemy I., in the third century before Christ, and who speaks of Moses as the noblest of the Jews, both in knowledge and valour. He states that, the worship of the gods having been much neglected in Egypt, in consequence of the large number of foreigners in that country, the people were warned by a pestilence to remove the cause of the celestial anger. The strangers were therefore expelled; and while some followed Danaus and Cadmus into Greece, the rest, who formed the greater number, were conducted by Moses into Judæa, which until then had lain desolate. This leader of men is described by Hecatæus as a great lawgiver and priest, as the builder of Jerusalem and other cities, as the organiser of the nationality which he founded, and as a successful warrior, who conquered many of the surrounding nations, and divided their lands among his followers. Of the religion established by Moses, Hecatæus gives a singular account. He says that he forbade all images of the gods, and taught that the Deity could not be represented by any visible form, being in fact the heaven which surrounds and embraces the world. The Monotheism of Moses, and his hatred of idolatry, are shadowed forth in this description of his religious system; and Strabo, who lived about the Christian era, bears similar testimony.

The other ancient accounts of Moses are those of Nicolaus of Damascus, Trogus Pompeius (whose narrative is preserved by Justinus), Lysimachus of Alexandria, and Tacitus. All have a certain

* Book I., section 26.

† This incident bears a remarkable similarity to what is related of Sesostris—that he forced a number of his Babylonian captives to labour on the public works, and that, having been goaded into revolt by the tyranny of their taskmasters, they seized a fortified city, and afterwards sent an army against the king. The same thing is recorded of Rameses II., who is undoubtedly one of the historic bases for the legend of Sesostris.

degree of affinity, and all differ widely from the Biblical relation, though with points of resemblance. By the Greeks and Romans generally, the Jews were regarded with great dislike, as a morose and haughty race. Diodorus Siculus states that when Antiochus Sidetes was besieging Jerusalem (this was in the year 134 B.C.), and had begun to treat with the city, the king was advised that the Jews ought to be destroyed, as they were the only nation having no community with others, all of whom, without exception, they regarded as enemies. Some years earlier, Antiochus Epiphanes, on conquering the Jews, went into the innermost shrine of the Temple at Jerusalem, which only the priests might enter, and there (says Diodorus) found a stone image of a man with a long beard, riding on an ass, with a book in his hand. This statue he took for an image of Moses, who had founded Jerusalem, gathered the people together, and given them wicked and misanthropic laws. Tacitus speaks of the "abominable customs" and "vile corruption" of the Jews. He writes that, "as their priests use the music of flutes and drums, wear crowns of ivy, and set up a golden vine in the Temple, some have thought they worshipped the conqueror of the East, the god Bacchus. But the rites are widely different. Bacchus inaugurated blithe and merry festivals: the customs of the Jews are absurd and melancholy." The fact of the alleged figure of Moses in the Temple being mounted on an ass, as related by Diodorus Siculus, seems to be explained by the assertion of Tacitus that Moses and his followers, when perishing of thirst in the wilderness, were directed to certain fountains by a herd of wild asses, which ran from the pasture to a rock covered with trees, and sending forth copious streams of water. Such were some of the legends concerning the great Hebrew lawgiver which were floating about the civilised world in what are commonly understood as the classical ages.

It is clear that the ancient world was filled with traditions of Moses and his people, and that these traditions were of a varied and often contradictory character. That some of the Greek and Roman writers had access to Jewish and Egyptian sources of information with respect to the great Hebrew lawgiver, may be fairly assumed; but whether the Pentateuch was known to any of them is doubtful. The date at which the Five Books of Moses were written—the question whether the authorship of those books is to be attributed wholly or in part to Moses, or to a number of writers, whose scattered compositions were at a later date gathered into one narrative—how far the whole was founded on still more ancient documents, and to what extent the writings are fragmentary, or, on the other hand, pervaded by the spirit of unity—all these are questions which for more than a hundred years have been discussed by the greatest scholars of Europe, with many antagonistic results. Only one thing appears to be ascertained with tolerable certainty—that the whole work going under the general designation of the Pentateuch did not finally assume its present shape till its revision was undertaken by Ezra, in the fifth century B.C., after the return from the Babylonish captivity.* It must therefore, where so much obscurity prevails, remain a matter of doubt whether the Mosaic legends, preserved by Manetho, Hecatæus, and others, had any reference to authentic traditions, or were pure inventions, belonging to the vast and shadowy realm of myths.

One remarkable circumstance in the Mosaic narrative is the contrast presented by the arbitrary and ferocious edicts of Pharaoh with the singular kindness and consideration which we know, as a matter of fact, were generally shown by the Egyptians, notwithstanding their pride of race, to the natives of foreign countries. The conduct of the Egyptians, even towards their enemies, according to Sir Gardner Wilkinson, contrasted favourably with that of other Eastern people of antiquity, such as the Assyrians and the Persians. In war, they cut off the hands of the dead only, as an evidence, which was afterwards produced before the king, of the number that had been slain. Their captives, it is true, were forced to work, as a necessary condition of life; but no systematic tortures were inflicted—no cruelties beyond occasional harsh treatment. "The opinions of Polybius (xv. 5) and late writers," adds the high authority to whom we are referring, "do not apply to the ancient Egyptians; and their humanity to slaves is shown by their conduct towards Joseph, and by the evidence of the monuments: indeed, the murder of a slave was punishable by Egyptian law."† No nation of antiquity was characterised by such equity and kindness as the subjects of the Pharaohs.

The route pursued by the Israelites towards the Red Sea has been made the subject of many curious speculations, at which we can merely glance in the most rapid manner. It would seem that they started from Rameses, to the north-east of Heliopolis, and therefore in the Land of Goshen, which long before had been given them as their portion.

* Article on "The Pentateuch" in Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible."

† Note to Book III., chap. 29, of Rawlinson's Herodotus.

The march across the intervening territory occupied three days, and it is believed by modern commentators to have been along the line of the ancient canal, which stretched in a north-easterly direction from the place of setting forth. This must have conducted them through the valley now called the Wady-Tumeilát, and, if persisted in, would soon have led to the Isthmus of Suez and the southern end of Palestine. But, as their appearance in that locality might have brought the fugitives into collision with the Philistines, and induced many to return into Egypt, they were directed to bend southward, which conducted them to the shores of the Red Sea. The place of crossing cannot be identified, though, according to the narrative, it must have been near the head of the gulf, which at that time extended several miles farther north than it does now, as appears by the salt lakes still existing in the Isthmus of Suez. The subsequent relations of Moses towards the Jewish people belong to the history of that race, which will be treated in later portions of this work. In the present Chapter we have been concerned only with the doings of the Israelites in the country of the Nile, under the sceptres of Egyptian monarchs. The period is one of very great interest, for it is distinguished by events which have had an immense influence on a large part of the world, and which are, so to speak, the well-springs of religions that are still widely active among many races. It is also a period, which, from its antiquity, and from the intermixture of legend with fact, offers several curious problems for the investigation of the learned. The Greeks, evidently, had a very different opinion of Moses and the Jews to that which the Hebrew writings themselves set forth.

Some reference should be made to the city of Rameses, from which the Israelites are supposed to have set out. It is stated in the first chapter of Exodus (verse 11) that the Hebrews, during the time of the persecution, "built for Pharaoh treasure-cities, Pithom and Raamses." The first of these towns is thought to have been situated in the most eastern part of Lower Egypt, on the borders of the Land of Goshen; and the name is interpreted as meaning "the City of Tum," or Atum, the deity of the setting sun, as Ra was the deity of the rising sun. Raamses is the same name with Rameses, one of the grandest of the Egyptian sovereigns: it means "the son of Ra," and is therefore, like the other appellation, associated with the solar divinity. Both cities probably lay on the canal of Rameses the Great, within the nome, or canton, of Heliopolis, another place associated with the worship of the sun. It is a curious fact that, according to Manetho, Heliopolis was the city where Moses, in the early part of his life, served as an Egyptian priest; and that the writer of the Acts of the Apostles (vii. 22) speaks of the great lawgiver as having been "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians." Some modern speculators on the exact date of the Exodus have contended that the city Raamses must have been named after one of the monarchs called Rameses, and that consequently the departure of the Israelites was subsequent to the reign of Rameses I., and probably in that of Rameses II. It does not, however, necessarily follow that either the city of Raamses, or "the land of Rameses" mentioned in Genesis (xlvii. 11), apparently as another name for Goshen, received its title from the first Rameses recorded among the kings. Lepsius was inclined to identify the site of Raamses with the ruins at Abou Kesheyd; but it seems probable that the city lay towards the western rather than the eastern end of the Wady-Tumeilát, along which, as we have seen, the Israelites appear to have moved. This, however, is a minor point, with respect to which (since it does not touch on any matters of importance) we can afford to remain in the dark.

A MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT.*

CHAPTER VIII.

THE EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH DYNASTIES OF EGYPT.

Expulsion of the Shepherd Kings—Glories of the Eighteenth Dynasty—The Queen Amen-nunt—Brilliant Reign of Thothmes III.—State of Egyptian Art at this Period—Reign of Amunoph III.—The "Vocal Memnon" and the Memnonium—Thebes, and its Architectural Grandeur—Scientific Resources of the Egyptians—Religious Innovations: Rule of the "Stranger Kings"—Introduction of Sun-worship—Reign of Horus—Commencement of the Nineteenth Dynasty—Conquests and Public Works of Sethi I.—Accession of Rameses II.—Wars with the Kheta—Memorials of Rameses—The Rock-Temples of Abousimbel—Grand Edifices constructed by Rameses—The Great Canal from the Mediterranean to the Red Sea—Death of Rameses—Close of the Nineteenth Dynasty.

WHATEVER the origin of the Shepherd Kings, their power in Egypt was the dominant power for a very long period. According to some accounts, they reigned in the country of the Nile for five hundred and eleven years; according to others, for six hundred and twenty-five years. Yet they never combined with the native race, nor were ever accepted by that race as other than strangers and sacrilegious despots. That these interlopers should have been expelled after so prolonged an occupation might seem as extraordinary as if the descendants of the Norman nobility in England had been driven out as late as the time of Elizabeth or William III., were it not that the Shepherds always existed as a body of foreigners, totally distinct from the people whom they governed or oppressed. They were simply a race of warlike monarchs and nobles, holding the land in subjection as long as their strength sufficed for that end, and finally giving way before the superior force of native rulers. About the year 1525 B.C., the *Eighteenth Dynasty*, consisting of pure Egyptians, succeeded at Thebes to the power which had been exercised there by the Eleventh, Twelfth, and Thirteenth Dynasties. One of the kings of this Eighteenth line, named Taakan, was requested by Apepi or Apappus II., a monarch of the Shepherd race, to furnish him with assistance towards building the temple of Sutech, or Set—a deity of whom but little is known, but who seems to have been regarded with great abhorrence by the genuine Egyptians. The two rulers quarrelled over some of the details. War broke out, and, after a struggle of many years' duration, Avaris was besieged by Aahmes I., of the Eighteenth Dynasty (called Amosis by Greek writers), and taken in the fifth year of his reign. So great a disaster proved the entire ruin of the Shepherd domination, which had doubtless been growing weaker for a considerable time. Aahmes was not merely a great warrior; he was unquestionably the leader of a national movement, in which the true Egyptians rose up against their alien tyrants. The last of the Shepherd sovereigns, Tatuan, accompanied by his army—which, of course, belonged to the same Asiatic race as himself—fled from Egypt through the Isthmus of Suez, and was pursued as far as Saruhen, or Sharon, in Judæa. This was in the sixth year of the reign of Aahmes I., and must therefore have been about 1519 B.C.

As the result of his conquest, Aahmes I. obtained the sovereignty of all Egypt, which thenceforth (with the exception of a brief period of anarchy after the death of Amunoph III.) remained under a single native monarchy until the Ethiopic conquest, in the eighth century B.C. During the reign of this Aahmes, the horse was for the first time mentioned on any of the

* This bas-relief was discovered in the tomb of Ptah-hotep, a nobleman who lived under the fifth dynasty, at Sakkara, near Memphis; his followers are represented playing and feasting before him.

COLOSSAL STATUES AT THEBES.

monuments; and it is believed that the animal was introduced into Egypt by the Shepherds. The Asiatic nations were from a very early period remarkable for their horses and chariots, the use of which in war may have contributed largely to their successes. In later times, however, the Egyptians themselves acquired a reputation in this respect, and the chariots and horses of Egypt are mentioned in several parts of the Bible as forming an important element in the military strength of the Jews. Aahmes I. reigned twenty-six years, and in 1499 B.C. was succeeded by Amunoph I. (Amenophis), who extended his dominions beyond the frontier, and added some new chambers to the great temple of Karnak. His successor was Thothmes I. This monarch ascended the throne in 1478 B.C., warred in Ethiopia, Libya, and other countries, and was followed by two more sovereigns of the same name. The arts flourished under the assured dominion of these princes, and Egypt enjoyed a time of great prosperity. The genius of the people, long oppressed by a foreign and unsympathetic rule, had free scope to assert itself, and some of the most distinctive principles of Grecian art were first elaborated in that African land which was regarded by the Greeks themselves as one of the chief progenitors of civilisation.

The greatest monarch of this period was Thothmes III. His predecessor and elder brother, the second Thothmes, died a minor; and during the whole life of the child, as well as during the infancy of the third of that name, the government had been administered by their sister, or half-sister, Amen-nunt (the Amensis of Manetho), who acted as regent for twenty-two years, and caused several monuments to be erected in her name, on the walls of which she is depicted dressed as a man, and presenting offerings to the gods. A good deal of mystery surrounds this princess, and it has even been supposed that she was a foreign conqueror—possibly the Assyrian Semiramis, who is said by Clemens to have reigned in Egypt, or to have laid claim to the throne. That she was really an Assyrian, however, is not very likely; but she would seem to have exercised arbitrary power after the time when she should have laid it down. Certain it is that Thothmes III. regarded her with detestation, erasing her name from the monuments, and ordering his own to be put in its place. In some instances this has been done with so much carelessness that the sentences run—"King Thothmes, *she* has made this work for *her* father, Amun" (Amunoph I.). Amen-nunt was omitted from the list of monarchs made in the reign of Thothmes, nor is her name mentioned in the lists drawn up at a later date by Rameses II. at Thebes and Abydos. She has a place in history nevertheless, and is associated with some of the grandest works of Egyptian art. The great obelisks at Karnak were probably due to her, and she added largely to the tomb, or rock-temple, of Thothmes I., on the western side of the Nile, besides erecting several other monuments in various parts of Egypt.

Thothmes III. delivered himself as speedily as he could from the dictation of Amen-nunt, and then entered on a career of great brilliance, both as a conqueror and a patron of the arts. Manetho says it was he who expelled the Shepherd Kings from all Egypt, with the exception of Avaris, and that the final departure of the foreigners was under a capitulation during the reign of Thothmes IV.; but, as we have seen, that event took place several years earlier, in the time of Aahmes I. Whether Thothmes III. (who began his reign in 1468 B.C.) led his own armies, or trusted to his generals, is uncertain; but his conquests were numerous. Egypt, in fact, now became something more than a kingdom: it rose to the position of an Empire. The whole of Western Asia became in some degree tributary to the rulers of Thebes, whose armies, marching through the plains of Philistia and the valleys of Cœle-Syria, on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, carried terror even into the heart of the Assyrian monarchy. The Hittites were compelled to submit, and tribute was exacted from their cities, as well as from Nineveh and Babylon. Representatives of the vanquished sovereigns conveyed these payments to Thebes, and thus, by a practical acknowledgment of their defeat, obtained immunity from complete subjection. Ethiopia, Arabia, and Cyprus, were also among the conquests of Thothmes III., who seems to have enjoyed a long period of uninterrupted good fortune. In the pictures of his triumphs still to be seen on the monuments, we find a lively representation of the widely-separated races whom he reduced, and the splendid variety of the tributes which were laid at his feet. Dark-haired and light-haired nationalities move in procession towards the monarch. Strange animals, unknown to Egypt—elephants, bears, camel-leopards, apes—join in the motley pageant of submission. Ebony, ivory, rare woods and precious metals, are offered by the suitors for Egyptian favour. Gold in dust, in ingots, and in rings, gold and silver vases, porcelain, ostrich-feathers, and other rich commodities, are brought in profusion to the royal throne; and we see that Egypt had become not merely an African, but also an Asiatic, Power.

It is evident that Thothmes III. had in a high degree the magnificent instincts of an Oriental monarch. He was a great builder, and, besides adding considerably to the grand temples at Thebes, erected several monuments at Memphis, Heliopolis, Coptos, Ombos, and other cities of Egypt and Ethiopia. A colossal statue of him, in red granite, was set up at Karnak, a suburb of Thebes. The head and arm of this effigy are in the British Museum, and we may see by them the titanic scale on which the ancient Egyptians worked. Sir Gardner Wilkinson says that Thothmes III. has left more monuments than any other Pharaoh, except the second Rameses,* and that more scarabæi and other small objects have been discovered with the name of this king on them than are associated with any monarch, without exception, who reigned before or after.† Several obelisks were executed by his order, of which the most remarkable are now to be seen at Alexandria, at Constantinople, and at Rome. The style in which most of his buildings were executed is in the highest order of Egyptian art; but occasionally he seems to have indulged an eccentric fancy in the production of architectural singularities, which contradict the general purity of his taste.

The reign of Thothmes III. has furnished the modern world with an unusual number of sepulchral paintings, which, though appearing on the walls of tombs, depict the whole life of the ancient Egyptians from the cradle to the grave. The vast ranges of catacombs on the western side of the Nile, near Thebes, abound in these extraordinary paintings, in mummies, and in objects of art, which reveal the civilisation of the Pharaohs as if it were a thing still existing. In those dim and cavernous recesses are found images, bottles, urns, household utensils, instruments of music, articles of personal adornment, pots once holding the paint with which Egyptian women darkened their eyes, and the very sticks with which they applied the colour. The scenes delineated by the pencil are realistic in the highest degree. The Egyptian artist, unlike his brother of Assyria, did not confine his view to kings, priests, and other great ones of the earth. He was as broad and general as life itself; or as death. One might say there was a democratic instinct in these people, their sympathy with the human drama was so all-inclusive. The monarch is there in his pomp, his triumph, and his power; but the poor man is there too,—the labourer, the fisherman, the tradesman, the servant,—the cook discharging the offices of the kitchen, the groom reining in his master's horse, the undertaker preparing the dead body for the grave. Strange shapes of gods are there, peopling with dreams and phantasies the land of shadows, and the twilight of the world to come; but men of humble birth do humble tasks, or amuse themselves with games which often greet us with a quaint familiarity across the dusty ruins of three thousand years. The feast is set out; the guests are arranged; the ladies admire each other's jewellery; the reveller is carried home intoxicated; the license of enjoyment is succeeded by the languor of debauch. A wild spirit of caricature starts up, not seldom, through this procession of a vanished world: even the presence of death does not wholly check it. The walls of Egyptian tombs display at once the vanity of existence, and the humour of our transitory lives.

Thothmes III. reigned fifty-four years, and was succeeded, in 1414 B.C., by his son, Amunoph (or Amenophis) II., of whom but little is recorded. Thothmes IV. was the next monarch of the Eighteenth Dynasty; but of him also there is not much to relate, except that he warred with the Libyans and Ethiopians, and caused the great Sphinx, near the Pyramids, to be cut out of the rock. Amunoph III., whose reign began about 1400 B.C., is thought to have been partly of foreign origin, probably on the mother's side; for his features undoubtedly show something of a negro cast. He was a great warrior, carrying his arms into distant lands, and making his power felt as far as Mesopotamia in one direction, while in the other his conquests in Ethiopia were pushed farther south than those of any of his predecessors. In the records of his reign, the name of his queen, Taia, is usually introduced with his own, and on one of the large scarabæi of this period the king mentions having constructed for his consort a tank, measuring 3,700 cubits in length, and 700 in breadth. On another scarabæus he states that the number of lions he slew on a particular occasion was a hundred and two.

Very numerous and important were the public works executed by Amunoph III. He added considerably to the great temple at Karnak, and built the principal part of that of Luxor, together with one on the opposite (or western) bank, famous for the colossal sitting figures forming part of the *dromos*, or paved approach to the edifice. The island of Elephantine was adorned by him with small, but beautiful, religious structures; and another of these fanes he caused to be reared at Soleb, in Ethiopia, on the columns of which he

* Commentary on Rawlinson's Herodotus, Vol. II.

† "Ancient Egyptians," Vol. I.

enumerated the countries he had subdued in Africa and Asia. Stations on the road to the emerald mines were either built or repaired by this prince; and so elaborate was their construction that hewn stones, carved with hieroglyphics, were introduced into the walls. But the most famous of the monuments associated with the name of Amunoph III. is "the vocal Memnon," described by several ancient writers. This was one of the enormous sitting figures before the Temple of Luxor to which allusion has already been made. Memnon was the Greek form of the name Amunoph, or Amenophis; and, according to the Hellenic legend, the person so called was a king of Ethiopia, the son of Tithonus and Aurora, who came with a body of ten thousand men to assist his uncle, Priam, during the Trojan War. By Ethiopia the Greeks appear to have sometimes understood Upper Egypt, in which Thebes was situated; and when speaking of Karnak and Luxor, we must recollect that they were parts of Thebes, each having distinct characteristics, yet both combining to make the grand totality of the Egyptian capital. The greater part of that magnificent city, including Luxor and Karnak, was on the eastern bank of the Nile; but the celebrated statue of Memnon, and the vast ranges of rock-hewn tombs, are on the western side.

The vocal Memnon, like its companion image, is carved out of a mass of breccia, and is forty-seven feet high, with a pedestal of six feet. In allusion, doubtless, to the supposed origin of Memnon, as the son of the Morn, it was alleged that this statue uttered a sound like the snapping of a harp-string when struck by the first beams of the sun. Such, at least, was the general belief of antiquity; though the Persian conqueror, Cambyses, suspecting that the note was produced by some priest or a mechanical contrivance hidden in the body of the figure, is said to have broken the image from the head to the middle, without discovering anything. Even after this act, the musical vibration was still thought to issue from the carven stone at the touch of sunrise. Many conjectural explanations of the phenomenon have been advanced; but the mystery remains a mystery still, and it is perhaps questionable whether the fact was exactly what popular tradition affirmed it to be. Strabo, who visited Thebes a few years before the birth of Christ, states that he and Ælius Gallus, together with several friends and a large number of soldiers, were standing by the colossal statues early in the morning, when they heard a peculiar sound, like the effect of a slight blow, but could not determine whether it came from the broken figure, or from the pedestal from which it had been cast down, or from the surrounding multitude. The impression among the Egyptians at that time was, that before Cambyses fractured the colossus it uttered what were called the seven mysterious vowels (of which no exact account can be given), but that afterwards the sound was less complex. In some later age, the figure was repaired with sandstone in separate layers, and it yet occupies its original place, confronting the sunrises which no longer make it vocal. When Sir Gardner Wilkinson examined the statue several years ago, he found in the hollow of the lap a stone, which, on being struck with a hammer, gave a metallic sound similar to that of brass. In the opinion of that learned Egyptologer, a priest may have been hidden in this concavity, and have produced the effect in a very simple way. But it is difficult to believe that such a deception could have been carried on for ages, especially after the action of the sceptical Cambyses, supposing the imputation against him to be true. It is to be recollected that the deception, if practised at all, was practised in an open space, without any of those appliances or aids to concealment which a temple, or other enclosure, is so well calculated to afford.

On the back of this remarkable statue is the name Amunoph, together with the title "Phra (*i.e.*, the Sun), Lord of Truth." The legs of the figure are inscribed with attestations, in Greek and Latin, of persons who had heard the sound during the time of the Roman Empire; so that there can be no reasonable doubt that a sound of some description was really given forth, though whether this was the result of deception, or was some natural effect of sunlight operating on the stone, it is impossible to say. It is more likely to have been due to natural causes than to a successful trick, practised regularly every morning for many centuries, and never once detected during all that time. In support of the former theory, it should be mentioned that Alexander von Humboldt speaks of certain sounds which are heard to proceed from rocks on the banks of the Orinoco at sunrise, and which the great naturalist attributed to confined air making its escape from crevices or caverns. What is more remarkable is that the French *savants* who were in Egypt with the first Napoleon perceived similar vibrations at Karnak, on the opposite bank of the Nile to that of the vocal Memnon. A modern writer, who has made a particular study of the whole subject, calls attention to the fact that Strabo was the first author who mentioned the mysterious note, and that no one ever alluded to

the sound after the restoration of the statue, which is thought to have taken place during the reign of the Emperor Septimius Severus, about the close of the second, or in the early part of the third, century of our era. From these facts the critic infers that the noise proceeded from the effect of the sun upon the fractured stone, and that it ceased when the damage was repaired.* It cannot, indeed, be said that any explanation is entirely satisfactory; but we must recollect that religious awe and popular credulity are certain to have magnified the sound, and, perhaps, to have given it a character of greater regularity in its recurrence than was actually the case.

Some doubt exists as to whether the statue described by Strabo and Pausanias as the vocal Memnon is the same as that which is now recognised as such. Those writers state that the upper part of the figure had in their time fallen down; and Strabo says that a popular tradition, which appears to have ignored Cambyses in the matter, attributed this result to an earthquake. There had, in fact, been a terrific earthquake at Thebes something less than twenty years before the visit of Strabo. The general belief, it seems, was that the sound came from that part of the statue which remained on the base. At the present day, the upper part is in its right position, though it does not form one piece with the rest. The figure is the northernmost of the two colossal statues on the west bank of the Nile, and, in all respects save that just mentioned, agrees with the descriptions given by Strabo and Pausanias. The probability, therefore, is that the broken statue (whether broken by Cambyses or by an earthquake) was repaired in some later age. Two admirable copies of the vocal Memnon, found near the colossus, but of smaller size, are now preserved in the British Museum, together with a third, more mutilated.

Of the fabulous Memnon, as distinguished from the historic Amunoph, several accounts were given in the ancient world. The Egyptian priests of a remote epoch alleged that he was a prince of their country who had conquered Assyria, whence he proceeded to Troy. In a later age, they said he was the same with Osymandyas, the conqueror of many nations, who, on his return from a distant expedition, built the Memnonium, a magnificent temple on the western side of the Nile. On the gigantic sitting figure of the hero, contained in this structure, were inscribed the words—"I am Osymandyas, the king of kings. If any one wishes to know how great I am, and where I lie, let him excel one of my works."† Osymandyas, however, appears to have been a monarch distinct from Memnon, who, as already intimated, must be regarded as identical with Amunoph III. The Greek legends touching Memnon are very confused and contradictory. According to Diodorus Siculus, Tithonus, the father of Memnon, governed Persia at the time of the Trojan war, as the viceroy of Teutamus, a king of Assyria; and Memnon himself erected at Susa a palace, which was afterwards called the Memnonium. That there was actually a building of that name at Susa, cannot well be doubted; but it seems probable that this was not erected until after the Persian conquest of Egypt, and that the appellation was borrowed from that country. Sir Robert Ker Porter has stated in his book of eastern travels (1821-2) that the structure at Persepolis called the Chehl Minar, or Forty Columns, bore a strong resemblance, both as a whole and in its details, to the architectural style of Egypt. But it is certain that Persia copied Egypt, and not Egypt Persia.

During the period of Egyptian history at which we have now arrived, Thebes was in its greatest glory. It was not merely the capital of Egypt, but, according to Herodotus and Aristotle, gave its name to the whole country. Homer, referring in the "Iliad" to this splendid metropolis, describes it as a hundred-gated city, and says that out of each of its portals it could send forth two hundred chariots, with horses and men, to encounter an enemy. But it is not likely that Homer was ever in Egypt, and his allusions were doubtless heightened by poetry, though the facts themselves were wonderful. The buildings and sculptures still existing at Thebes are among the most ancient in Egypt, and consist of temples, colossi, sphinxes, and obelisks, occupying a space of six miles from east to west on the eastern side of the river; on the western side are tombs hewn out of the rocks, and abounding in the most interesting antiquities in the world. Thebes might have been a city of the giants, so enormous was the area covered, so vast were the buildings, so titanic the sculptures, the gateways, the towers, the columns, and the approaches. Even in its desolation, the part now called Karnak is astounding in its grandeur and its colossal dimensions. An irregular avenue of sphinxes, extending 2,180 yards, connects the southern termination of this locality with the northern entrance to the Temple of Luxor; and at every point are the remains of numerous edifices of the most extraordinary

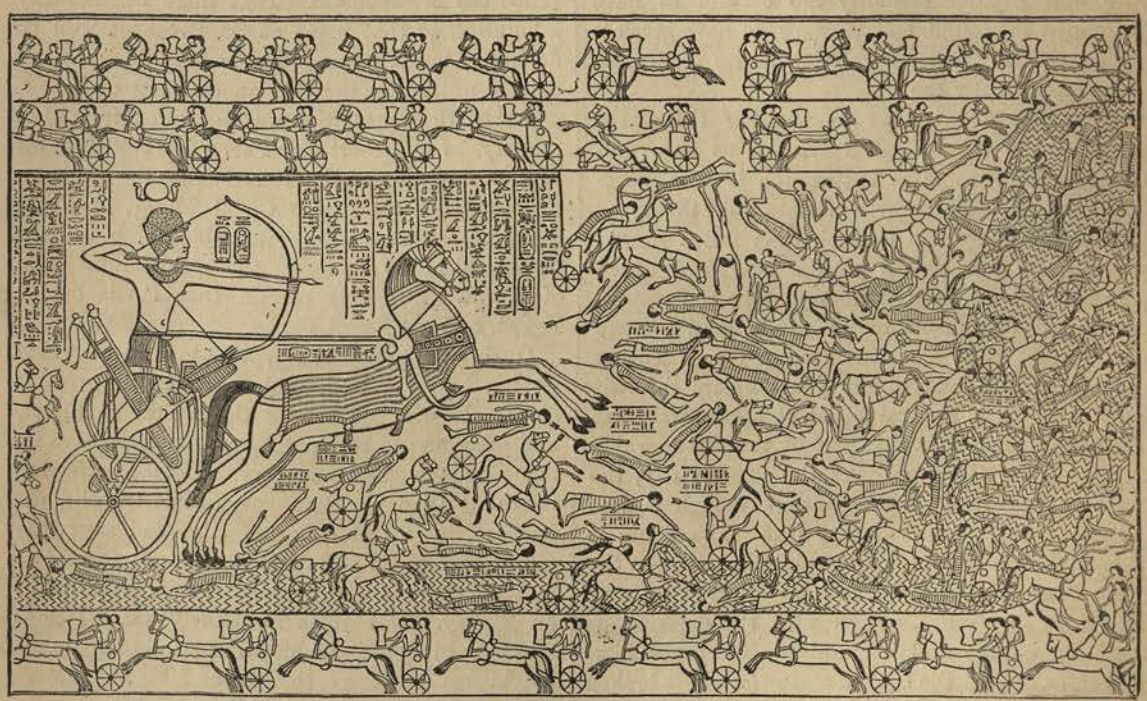
* See a very curious article on "The Sounding Statue of Memnon" in *Fraser's Magazine* (Vol. XLII., 1850).

† This is the subject of Shelley's noble sonnet, "Osymandyas."

splendour and majesty. The grand structures of Karnak, however, belong to a somewhat later period of Egyptian history.

In the neighbourhood of Thebes, as in that of Memphis, vast ranges of tombs were hollowed out of the rocks, which in that locality rise three hundred feet above the plain. These sepulchres are visible at the present day in much the same condition as when they were made, and have served as mines of Egyptian antiquities. Several rows of able mummies preserve something of the outward form of men who lived and died many centuries before the Christian era. Countless rolls of papyrus perpetuate the religious services of a long-forgotten faith. The past is buried in these obscure and silent caverns, and its lineaments confront us out of the dust of ages.

But the first wall of rocks west of the Nile does not contain all the tombs in which the people of Thebes deposited their dead. A desolate ravine



A BATTLE-SCENE FROM THE RAMESEUM AT THEBES.*

chambers lie above one another, like the stories of a building; and staircases—straight in some instances, winding in others—lead from the lower to the higher levels. The tombs at the basement are the largest and handsomest; they were those of the rich and noble. Long passages and corridors, running far into the cliff, conduct the explorer from one part of the labyrinth to another; galleries extend from point to point of the upper ranges; perpendicular shafts strike downward through the masses of the hills. The walls of the catacombs are painted, in brilliant colours, with scenes and figures which, as already remarked, depict the whole compass of Egyptian life. In the darkness of this ancient world of death, innumer-

leads from this to the second range, hewn out of another line of stony hills, where the tombs are even more splendid than the most costly in the eastern series. Here lie many of the Pharaohs who had their royal seat in the adjacent city. The sepulchres thus constructed in the mountains were to the kings of Thebes what the Pyramids had been to the earlier sovereigns of Memphis. Porticoes of architectural design lead into suites of galleries, of ante-chambers, of chapels for the offering of propitiatory sacrifices, and of tombs containing the sarcophagi of buried monarchs. Broad passages, often obstructed by transverse bars, penetrate the rock in various directions, sometimes to the extent of three hundred and sixty feet. The tombs themselves are closed with doors. All is massive, superb, and regal; dark with the overshadowing of time and of the superincumbent hills, solemn

* This slab is in the hypostyle or "Hall of the Presence." It represents the capture of a city by Rameses II.

with ancient secresy, and mystical with the procession of painted allegories. Pillars, corridors, halls, staircases, sculptures, frescoes, give splendour and dignity to this sepulchral realm. They who would reproduce the vanished life of Egypt must study it beneath the wings of death.

From an examination of the ruins of Thebes, it is evident that the ancient Egyptians, like the Assyrians, understood the construction of the arch.

The art-manufactures of these people were often in admirable taste; in many respects, they seem to have anticipated the luxurious inventions of modern times. The practice of medicine was divided into as many branches as there were maladies, so that no physician attended to more than one complaint. Agriculture and gardening were assiduously followed. Eggs were hatched by artificial means. The mechanical

THE MEMNONIUM AT THEBES.

The tombs, moreover, show that many of the refinements of civilisation were known to these children of a bygone age. Embossed leather, stained with various colours, has been found there. The mummies are wrapped in linen cerements. Gilding and varnishing were employed with excellent taste and skill. Glass was used, both for articles of utility and for personal adornment. Copper was cast in several forms, and sometimes rolled into sheets. The dresses of the richer classes were ornate and splendid; the head was frequently covered with a wig; and a great deal of finely-wrought jewellery was worn.

appliances by which enormous masses of stone were transported from distant quarries must have been elaborate and powerful; the execution of so many works at once massive and delicate argues the possession of a great variety of tools; and the granite sometimes introduced into these mighty structures was brought up to an exquisite polish. The drawing of the Egyptians was always somewhat rude; yet it was not devoid of life and action. That the artists took pains with their designs is shown by a curious fact, for which Belzoni is the authority. That explorer observed in the tombs some drawings executed by learners, and afterwards

corrected in faulty places with a different-coloured chalk, and by a superior hand. Drawings of subjects are found, which were afterwards to be sculptured on the walls. The most conscientious devotion to the purposes of art was combined with a religious belief which was undoubtedly deep and sincere.

The original name of Thebes was No, Na-Amun, or Amun-hi, meaning "the abode of Ammon," the Egyptian Jupiter. This title was afterwards translated by the Greeks into Diospolis, "the city of Jove." Having the same precedence in Upper Egypt that Memphis enjoyed in the more northern division of the country, Thebes was called Ap, or Apé, the head or capital; and this, taking the feminine article before it, became, in the Memphian dialect, Thapé, which the Greeks converted into Thebæ—a name familiar to them as that of a city of Bœotia, supposed to have been founded by Cadmus, who was either a Phœnician or an Egyptian. The original site of Thebes was on the eastern bank of the Nile; but several magnificent buildings were afterwards erected in the Libyan suburb, as the parts west of the river were called, and it was here that the Theban monarchs hollowed out in the vast wall of rocky cliffs their city of the dead. From north to south, the ruins of the city and suburb cover a space of about two miles, and from east to west some four miles. Thebes was not the oldest of Egyptian cities, for Abydos, Hermonthis, and some other places, were built at a still earlier period; yet its antiquity was great. Hermonthis occupied the same ground in very primitive ages: Thebes seems to have arisen with the Eleventh Dynasty, about 2200 years B.C. Thenceforward, continued to flourish for many centuries, and its architectural glories were among the marvels of the ancient world. The most remarkable building on the western side of the Nile was the Memnonium, or palace-temple of Rameses II. (the Great), which Sir Gardner Wilkinson believed to be the same structure as that described by Diodorus Siculus on the authority of Hecatæus, and by those authors mentioned as the tomb of Osymandyas. This building (the ruins of which still exist, to the north-west of the vocal Memnon) contained the immense sitting figure which the Greeks supposed to be Osymandyas, but which was probably Rameses II. The edifice is by some writers thought to have been erected by an architect of the name of Memnon, and for that reason to have been called the Memnonium; but the whole story is confused and uncertain.

It was conjecturally at about this period of the world's history, or a little earlier, that iron was first discovered, owing, it is said, to the forests on Mount Ida in Greece having been fired by lightning, and the metal running down in streams. The date, however, cannot be fixed; and, while some believe the discovery to have been a few centuries later, others suggest that the hieroglyphics of the Egyptians, cut to a considerable depth in hard granite and basalt, could scarcely have been executed without tools of tempered steel. Copper, brass, and bronze appear to have been well known to the subjects of the Pharaohs; but they were very sparingly employed, and are seemingly inadequate to the production of such results. The scientific resources of the Egyptians are little better than a mystery to us, and we shall perhaps never be in a position to understand how, at so primitive an epoch, such extraordinary works can have been perfected.

During his long reign—which extended over at least thirty-six years, from 1400 to 1364 B.C.—Amunoph III. introduced some changes into the religion of his people, which were distasteful to them. These dogmas were probably of Ethiopian origin, and may have come to Amunoph through his mother. On the death of Amunoph, the next in the legitimate order of succession was Hor-em-heb, or Horus, his son; but a number of pretenders arose, and for about thirty years kept up a state of civil war, from which the country suffered much. The rival sovereigns (who may perhaps have been relatives of Horus) are described as "Stranger Kings." In all, there appear to have been seven of them; but the reigns of most were short. The second of the strangers, called Amun-Toônh, introduced his name into the Temple of Luxor; but it was afterwards erased by Horus. His title and representations of him also occur in a rock-tomb near Itfoo; and he is depicted at Koorna, receiving the visit of an Ethiopian princess, who brings a rich tribute with her. The longest reign of any among the interlopers was that of Atin-re-Bakhan, who seems to have been at first called Amunoph IV. Numerous monuments of his time are to be found at Thebes, Memphis, Apollinopolis Parva, and other places; and he extended his power into foreign countries. The metropolis of these Stranger Kings was Tel-el-Amarna; but after their expulsion the temples of that city were utterly destroyed by the Egyptians, who spared no pains to obliterate every vestige of the detested heretics throughout the land, though not always with success. Horus used the stones of their monuments at Thebes in the construction of his pyramidal towers in the Temple of Karnak.*

The precise nationality of the Stranger Kings is

* Sir Gardner Wilkinson's Commentary on Herodotus.

doubtful. They are described as Ethiopians; yet it does not follow that they were Africans. As the reader has been told, there were Oriental Ethiopians, as well as Ethiopians of the Nile; and reasons exist for believing that the intruders were of the former race, who, as well as their namesakes, were Cushites. Their principal seat was between Persia and India; and Eusebius, probably following Manetho, states that in the reign of Amunoph III. "the Ethiopians, migrating from the river Indus, came and dwelt near to Egypt." Sir Gardner Wilkinson, however, conceives that the troublers of Egypt proceeded rather from Southern Arabia (in later times known as Sheba), where the Cushites were certainly established. The Stranger Kings had all the despotic habits of Oriental monarchs, and it is related that soldiers and others in their service were obliged to crouch before them. It is probable that Amunoph himself was moderate in the introduction of changes, and that it was his successors, the rivals of Horus, who followed a purely revolutionary course. Yet Amunoph can hardly in all respects have kept to the religion of the Egyptians, for in the temple founded by him at Soleb, in African Ethiopia, Atin-re-Bakhan, one of the Strangers, and therefore probably an Oriental Ethiopian, revered him as a god. His widow also was treated with peculiar respect by the Stranger Kings, and her name (Taia) was assumed by some of their queens. The chief peculiarity of the alien faith was the worship of the sun; and Amunoph is represented, on a *stela* or monumental tablet of his reign, in combination with a figure of the sun, having rays terminating in human hands. We have seen, also, that the back of the statue called the vocal Memnon is inscribed with the name Amunoph, together with a reference to the sun, as the "Lord of Truth." It is true that "Phra" is the root of "Pharaoh," and, taken by itself, is simply a complimentary expression; but the addition of the words "Lord of Truth" is suggestive of a religious sentiment. This association with the solar worship is doubtless the origin of the fable about Memnon being the son of the morning, and answering to the touch of sunrise. Amunoph cut himself off from the majority of the Egyptians by his heretical practices. His sepulchre at Thebes was in a valley apart from those of the other Pharaohs, and in company with that of a Stranger King, whose name is not exactly known.

The still more heterodox successors of Amunoph III. made themselves hateful to the Egyptians by their irreligion. Amun, or Ammon, the chief deity of Thebes—the Jupiter of that city—was banished from the Pantheon. The worship of the native gods was suppressed, and the people were treated with great severity. The chief records of these interlopers are to be found in the paintings and carved work of the grottoes about the ancient city of Psinaula (supposed to be the same as Tel-el-Amarna), in certain sculptures on the hills near the old Hermopolis Magna, and in some other sculptures of Ethiopia. The sun is here represented as a disk with numerous rays, each terminating in a hand, one of which presents to the worshipper the symbol of life. Three names, with three distinct attributes, were given to the great luminary by these people: viz., Aten-ra, or the visible disk; Muee-ra, the brightness or radiation of the same; and Ra, the Power supposed to reside in the celestial orb. In an ancient inscription, this god is described as "Ra of the two solar abodes, who rejoices in the solar abode, in his name Muee-ra, who is in Aten-ra."* The worship of the sun was widely spread throughout the East, and assumed a variety of forms in different countries. Zoroaster, in the sixth century before Christ, gave a new application to this doctrine, and the Guebres, or fire-worshippers of Persia, were followers of the same opinion, as are the Parsees of India to the present day. But to the Egyptians this form of religious belief was particularly distasteful, though it is difficult to understand how they who worshipped animals could have found anything offensive in the ascription of divine powers to the visible source of fecundity and light.

It is doubtful how long the dominion of the Stranger Kings continued, but probably not less than thirty years. They were finally expelled by Horus, who seems to have maintained a species of regal power during the whole time they ruled in certain parts of the land. The intruders are not mentioned in the lists of kings given by Manetho and on the monuments, in all of which Horus is set down as the immediate successor of Amunoph III. Warlike in his habits, Horus not merely drove out the kings of foreign origin, but also gained several victories over the Ethiopians of the Nile. His undivided reign was somewhat short, though the whole reign, reckoning from his accession to his death, in 1327 B.C., must have lasted thirty-seven years. He was followed, apparently, by a king referred to by Manetho as Rathôtis, or Rathôs, but whose name does not appear on the monumental lists. With this obscure monarch the Eighteenth Dynasty came to a close. It seems to have lasted about two hundred years—from the early part of the sixteenth to a similar

* Horæ Ægyptiacæ, by Reginald Stuart Poole (1851).

period in the fourteenth century B.C. On the whole, the epoch had been one of great brilliance and success. Egypt had enjoyed the benefits of a united kingdom, of a native dynasty, and of a form of religion agreeable to the feelings of her people. Her internal development was marked, her boundaries were increased, and surrounding nations submitted to her power. The Pharaohs of the Eighteenth Dynasty were for the most part born rulers of men; and against few nations of the ancient world can so little be charged in derogation of their merits as against the Egyptians whom they governed.

The *Nineteenth Dynasty* was even more illustrious. It began about 1324 B.C., with the reign of Rameses I., who derived his descent from Aahmes I. and Amunoph I., but not from any of the later kings. His reign was of less than two years' duration, and he appears to have made no conquests, and to have erected few monuments. In 1322 B.C. he was succeeded by his son, Sethi I. (or Sethos), who at once inaugurated a series of successful expeditions. In the very first year of his reign he over-ran Syria; after which he subjugated Canaan and the adjacent countries to the north, punished those who had for some time past neglected to pay tribute, and re-established friendly relations with the steadfast vassals and allies of Egypt. It would appear that the Syrians had revolted, during the two previous reigns, from their position of dependence; but they were now overthrown by the advance of Sethi, who also directed his arms against the Mesopotamians, the Kheta (or Hittites), the Arabs, the Tahai, situated on the borders of Cilicia, and various African races. Triumphant in all these expeditions, he returned to Egypt laden with booty, and taking with him vast numbers of prisoners, whom he doubtless employed on the great public works of his reign. Among the grandest of these is the Hall of Columns in the Temple of Karnak, on the external walls of which are sculptures recording the victories of Sethi, commemorating his personal valour in encounters with the enemy, and depicting his return to Egypt amidst the rejoicings of the priests and people. Sir Gardner Wilkinson (in his commentary on Herodotus) speaks with particular enthusiasm of the tomb of this monarch in the valley of the kings at Thebes. The tomb was opened by Belzoni, and contains magnificent sculptures and paintings, together with a sarcophagus of Oriental alabaster. The reign of Sethi was very long, extending over more than half a century; but the conqueror's life seems to have terminated rather suddenly, for an extra chamber which he had directed to be added to his mausoleum was never finished, and exhibits to this day a number of figures sketched in outline, and left in that condition. In some respects, Sethi I. is to be identified with the fabulous Sesostris, and, apart from all poetical exaggeration, must be reckoned among the great warrior-princes of the ancient world.

The successor to Sethi I. was his son, Rameses II., called the Great—a monarch in whose achievements is to be found, still more than in those of his father, the origin of the stories about Sesostris. He is frequently described on the monuments as the "Beloved and confirmed of Ammon,—son of the god of the sun,—ruler of the obedient people;" and his name stands forth conspicuously in the line of Egyptian heroes. During the last few years of the preceding reign, he shared the government with Sethi, and distinguished himself by his martial exploits, which were continued on a still greater scale after he had attained to the sole power. One of his most difficult enterprises was that which he conducted against the Kheta, or Hittites. We have already explained that the Hittites were an Asiatic people, of great military strength and stubborn valour. Their dominions extended from Syria to the Euphrates; their infantry was highly disciplined, and they possessed a large number of chariots, which presented formidable obstacles to the Egyptian attack. Kedesh, the stronghold of the Hittites, was protected by a double ditch, and by the river Orontes, on which it stood; yet they were defeated by Rameses, who drove their chariots in confusion before him, and broke the ranks of their infantry. On this occasion, the chief of the Hittites was drowned in endeavouring to recross the river, and the fortress was taken. The war occurred in the fifth year of the reign of Rameses, and probably ended in his imposing a tribute on the people, whom otherwise he left undisturbed. A second and a third war with the same nationality followed in the ninth and twenty-first years of Rameses; and in the last of these expeditions the Egyptian monarch made a treaty with his troublesome antagonists. In the sieges of this reign, as appears by pictorial representations on the monuments, the battering-ram and scaling-ladder were used; also the testudo, a species of wooden cover, under which the soldiers advanced to the assault, or engaged in mining operations.

In going to attack the Hittites, Rameses had to pass through the country of the Philistines, on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean. These people also he subdued, after a very feeble resistance. The conqueror was not cruel in his treatment of the vanquished; but he showed his contempt of

pusillanimous foes by setting up in their country certain monuments bearing inscriptions and emblems testifying to their effeminacy.* These memorials were left by Rameses wherever he carried his arms, and one is still to be seen upon the rocks by the road-side above the river Lycus, near Beyrout, in Syria. It is evident, both from the monuments and from several papyri, that this martial king warred on numerous other nations, though it is not always easy to determine what those nations were. In his northern campaigns he is said to have been assisted by some Asiatic tribes, with whom he concluded an alliance; and in several instances the vanquished were made to supply auxiliaries for further expeditions. Rameses probably extended his conquests to the north-east of Syria, and of all these exploits we have records in paintings, in sculptures, and in inscriptions. Some of the places assailed had double and even triple walls; the moats were furnished with bridges; and both the attack and defence were conducted in a highly elaborate and scientific manner. The Kheta, who were well armed, and protected by light but effective coverings, depended much on their cavalry and chariots. The Egyptians seem to have employed few horsemen, though their chariots were numerous. Each car (as was the case in some of the Asiatic nations) contained two persons—the warrior and his charioteer; and from these light vehicles, driven at great speed, were sent forth clouds of arrows, in the management of which the subjects of the Pharaohs were remarkably skilful.

Herodotus relates that Sesostris (by whom there can be no doubt he meant Rameses II.) engraved two memorials of himself upon rocks in Ionia: one on the road from Ephesus to Phocæa; the other between Sardis and Smyrna. "In each case," says the historian, "the figure is that of a man, four cubits and a span high, with a spear in his right hand, and a bow in his left; the rest of his equipment being likewise half Egyptian, half Ethiopian. There is an inscription across the breast, from shoulder to shoulder, in the sacred character of Egypt, which says, 'With my own shoulders I conquered this land.' The conqueror does not tell us who he is, or whence he comes; though elsewhere Sesostris records these facts." A figure answering to this description, excepting in some slight details, has been discovered, within our own times, at Ninfi (the ancient Nymphæum), on what appears to have been the old road from Sardis to Smyrna. It differs, however, from all purely Egyptian types; the artistic style in which the figure is executed falls considerably below the Egyptian standard at the period of the Nineteenth Dynasty; and some critics have considered that the sculpture is of Scythian origin. At the present day, no traces of hieroglyphics are to be found on the breast; but their absence is accounted for by the rock being at that part very much weather-worn. Some faint outlines representing a bird, together with certain marks of which it is difficult to determine the nature, are discernible between the spear-head and the face. The French traveller, M. Ampère, believed that the titles of Rameses the Great are to be here discovered. Nevertheless, the origin of the figure is doubtful, though it can hardly be questioned that this is the very sculpture described by Herodotus.

Besides his Asiatic conquests, Rameses conducted successful expeditions into Ethiopia, which he added to his dominions. The rock-temples of Abousimbel, in that country, belong to the age of this conqueror, and are among the most extraordinary works of Egyptian art. They are on the western side of the Nile, within the limits of what is now called Nubia, and are hewn out of the solid rock, with figures of gigantic dimensions on both sides of the doorways. The interiors of the temples are on a similar scale of vastness: magnificent chambers open out from one another, with sculptured columns, colossal statues richly coloured and adorned, bas-reliefs, and paintings. These marvellous fanes, which still appear to start out of the barren desert as if they were the works of genii, were apparently dedicated to Osiris and Isis, and are marked in several places with the name and title of Rameses II. A *stela* set up in one of the temples speaks of the god Ptah-Sokari having granted that sovereign that the whole world should obey his behests, as the Kheta had. The life of Rameses seems to have been divided between foreign wars and the execution of great public works. He enlarged and beautified the temple of Ptah at Memphis; erected many religious structures and grand statues in that city and at Thebes, as well as others in towns of less importance; and adorned the small temple at Tanis with numerous granite obelisks. Besides the rock-hewn structures at Abousimbel, he conferred on Ethiopia a temple at Napata (now Gebel Berkel), which was afterwards enlarged by Tirhaka; and none of the Pharaohs has left so many statues, both colossal and of smaller dimensions, as Rameses the Great. His works included additions to the temples at Luxor and Karnak, and the stupendous edifice in the

* Herodotus, Book II., chap. 102, where Sesostris is the monarch named.

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western suburb of Thebes, to which we have already referred as the Memnonium, but which is more correctly described as the Rameseum. This immense palace-temple, the architectural splendour, majesty, and beauty of which it would perhaps be impossible to exaggerate, contained a curious astronomical ceiling, and, according to highest development with the Nineteenth Dynasty. Some observers have even detected in the works of Rameses the first signs of incipient decay—viz., conventionality and mannerism; but the results are, on the whole, magnificent.

One of the circumstances which connect Rameses with the mythical Sesostris is the fact that the

ROCK-TEMPLES AT ABOUSIMBEL.

Diodorus, a sacred library. Another interesting memorial of the same reign is the Tablet of Abydos, dedicated by Rameses to his predecessors, whose names are here presented in due order. The valuable historic stone so called is now in the British Museum, which also possesses a colossal bust of the great monarch (formerly in the Rameseum), several statues of him, and the fist of a gigantic figure of the same king, which, mutilated and cast down, is yet to be seen at Memphis. The architecture and arts of Egypt reached their former either made a number of canals in various parts of Egypt, or improved those which he found existing. The probability is that several had been formed in much earlier ages, and that Rameses deepened and widened them. One of the Egyptian water-ways, however, was really due in the first instance to him. This was the passage uniting the Mediterranean (or rather the Pelusiac branch of the Nile) with the Red Sea. The canal began about twelve miles to the north-east of Bubastis, and, after flowing nearly east for about thirty-three

miles, turned to the south-south-east, and continued for more than sixty miles to the head of the Arabian Gulf, as the Red Sea was anciently called. The work is thought to have been afterwards resumed by Necho, with whom it is often associated; but some have questioned whether it was ever completed. Pliny, indeed, specifically states that, after it had reached the bitter springs or lakes, the canal was abandoned, from fear of the greater height of the Red Sea. Yet it is certain that at one time it really entered those waters near the modern town of Suez, for evidence of its existence may still be seen there. Rameses undoubtedly commenced this canal, his name having been discovered in the remains of an ancient town still to be seen on the line of the disused channel. Herodotus says that Sesostris (Rameses II.) fitted out "long vessels," on the Red Sea, and was the first who went beyond the straits into the Indian Ocean. Diodorus gives the number of these vessels as four hundred; and it seems not improbable that the possession of an unbroken water-way from the Mediterranean to the Arabian Gulf, and so to the great southern main, may have suggested to this enterprising monarch the creation of a large marine armament. The canal, however, had to pass through a very

RAMESES II.*

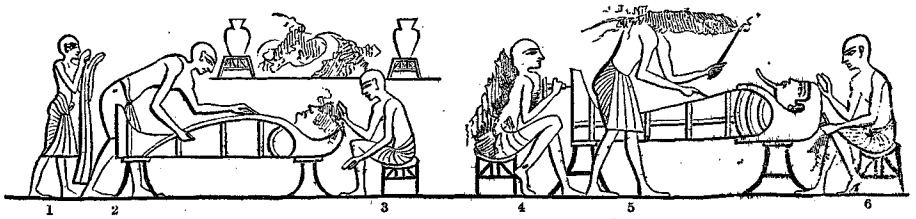
* The upper part of a colossal statue of Rameses II., in red granite. It stood in the Memnonium at Thebes, and was presented to the British Museum by H. Salt and L. Burckhardt in 1817.

sandy tract, and it appears to have been soon choked and silted up. The reopening of the disused channel by Necho, by Darius the Persian, by the Ptolemies, and still later by the Arabians, may have conferred upon many rulers in succession the honour of originating what in fact they only restored.

According to the account left by Herodotus, this celebrated water-highway was four days' journey in length, and broad enough to admit two triremes abreast. From the Pelusiac branch of the Nile, where the canal began, to the Red Sea, where it terminated, the course was about ninety-six miles. The shortest distance from the Mediterranean to Suez, overland, is (according to Sir Gardner Wilkinson) some twenty miles less; but the windings of the channel accounted for the difference. The depth of the canal was very great, and, as long as it was kept in good repair, its usefulness in the furtherance of commerce must have been considerable. But the liability to stoppage was a continual drawback, and the work of reparation involved a serious expenditure of money and life. Necho is said to have given up the work in despair, after losing a hundred and twenty thousand workmen—a number which is probably exaggerated, but which may bear some relation to the truth. Diodorus Siculus affirms that Darius the Persian was prevented from completing the canal owing to the greater height of the Red Sea as compared with the land of Egypt, but that the second Ptolemy overcame the difficulty by means of sluices. This, however, had been done long before the era of the Ptolemies; for the Egyptians were from an early date acquainted with the engineering contrivances necessary to the management of water at different levels. Sluices were constructed at the mouth of the canal, to equalise the current (which varied according to the greater or less height of the Nile, and the tide of the Red Sea), and to prevent the salt water from affecting that of the canal. The site of these sluices is thought to have been near Suez, where a channel, still visible, was cut in the rock, to facilitate the exit of the stream. The sluices themselves were possibly opened only during the annual overflow of the Nile, when the current ran strongly from the river to the Arabian Gulf. Even in the time of the Roman dominion, the canal was still in use; but, in the general decay consequent on the decline of that Empire, the ever-encroaching sands put a stop to navigation, which was not restored until the year 639, in the reign of the Caliph Omar. A hundred and thirty-four years later—namely, in the eighth Christian century—it was closed by order of the caliph then reigning, to prevent the despatch of supplies to Medina, which was occupied by a rival claimant to the supremacy over the Moslem world; and although an attempt was made, about the year 1000, to render the channel once more navigable for boats, the great water-way continued to decline, until the larger part of it was completely lost.* In our own times we have seen the Isthmus of Suez again intersected by a ship-canal—the work of M. de Lesseps—the outfall of which is near the spot where the ancient stream discharged its waters into the Red Sea.

Another of the great works of Rameses II. (if we may in all instances attribute the doings of Sesostris to him) was a wall built on both sides of the Nile valley, at the edge of the cultivated land, the object of which was to protect the peasants and their crops from the wandering Arabs, who were prevented from entering the enclosed parts, except at points guarded by soldiers, or by the peasants themselves. It was possibly in this reign, also, that the land was partitioned among the cultivators of the soil, who were required to pay into the national exchequer a fixed tax, proportioned to the amount of each man's possessions; though whether this was the first time the land had been so divided may be doubtful. The reign of Rameses was certainly one of the most brilliant in the history of ancient Egypt. It was also among the longest, having lasted sixty-one years, or, according to Josephus, sixty-six. The dates are said to have been from 1311 to 1245 B.C.; but it is not easy to reconcile these conjectures with what is related of the reigns of preceding monarchs. By his two wives, Rameses II. had twenty-three sons and three daughters. He was succeeded by his thirteenth son, Meneptah, or Ptah-men (the Amenophis, or Amenophath, of Manetho), who, together with his own son and successor, Sethi II., did nothing worthy of record. With the latter of these sovereigns, the Nineteenth Dynasty—which had done so much to advance the power and grandeur of the country—came to an end, and the annals of Egypt enter on a less brilliant stage.

* Sir Gardner Wilkinson's Notes to Herodotus (II. 158), and "Ancient Egyptians," Vol. I., chap. 2.



THE PREPARATION OF MUMMIES.*

CHAPTER IX.

EGYPT FROM RAMESES III. TO PSAMMETICHUS I

Reign of Rameses III.: the Twentieth Dynasty—Decline of Egypt during subsequent Reigns—Accession of the Twenty-first Dynasty—Sacerdotal Warriors, and their Influence on Egypt—The Twenty-second Dynasty apparently Assyrian—Sheshonk, and his War with Judah—Continued Decline of Egypt under the Twenty-third and Twenty-fourth Dynasties—Bocchoris and Anysis—State of Anarchy and Confusion—Early History of Ethiopia, and its connection with Egypt—Character of Ethiopian Religion and Civilisation—Invasion of Egypt by Pianchi, King of Ethiopia—Egypt completely Conquered by Sabaco, the Ethiopian: the Twenty-fifth Dynasty—Mildness and Justice of Sabaco—Accession of Tirhakah—War with Sennacherib of Assyria—Story of Sethos, the Priest-King—Predominance of Assyria over Egypt—Death of Tirhakah—Struggle of Ethiopia with Asshur-bani-pal—Psammetichus and the Greeks—Beginning of the Twenty-sixth Dynasty—Encouragement of Foreigners by Psammetichus—Capture of Ashdod—Revolt of Egyptian Troops—Public Works of Psammetichus: the Serapeum.

GREAT Empires seldom collapse in sudden and unanticipated ruin: they decline by degrees, which, however, may sometimes be more rapid than a long course of prosperity would lead one to suppose. Such was the case with Egypt under the Pharaohs. For about three centuries, the Egyptians had distinguished themselves in arms and in arts, had brought several nations under their dominion, and had at the same time produced an extraordinary number of magnificent works in architecture, sculpture, and ornamentation. They seem to have partially exhausted their genius by the prodigality with which it was manifested, and signs of decay were visible during the last few reigns of the Nineteenth Dynasty. A reaction, however, set in with Rameses III., the founder of the *Twentieth Dynasty*, unless, with some writers, we are to reckon him the third of that line. This monarch was worthy of the name he bore. By land he achieved signal victories; at sea, his fleets vanquished the naval forces of certain communities, who, as they are indicated on the monuments, have been identified with the Cretans and the Carians. Previous Egyptian kings, especially Sethi I. and Rameses II., had penetrated far into Asia, reaching, it is thought, even the vicinity of the Caspian. To secure their power, they established military colonies in several places, and these were of great service to succeeding rulers when conducting other expeditions. Rameses III. was thus enabled to re-assert the predominance of his land over several Asiatic nations. Some of the tribes conquered by him seem to have been even farther from Egypt than those which had been subdued in earlier times. Nevertheless, he had to fight for the retention of his throne. For some time before his accession, Egypt had been harassed by a combination of Asiatic and Libyan invaders; and although these had been driven out by the father of Rameses, the weakness of the country still invited aggression. A confederation of Sardinians, Italians, and Libyans advanced beyond Memphis in the eighth year of the new reign, and disputed the sovereignty of Egypt. They were defeated and the rule of the native king was thenceforward firmly established.

Some of the foreign expeditions of Rameses III. were before the invasion of his own realm; others occurred at a later epoch. Taken altogether, they established his reputation as a great conqueror, and enabled him to devote the remainder of his reign to the arts of peace. On finally returning to the valley of the Nile with an immense booty, he distributed rewards to his troops, and then turned his attention, like so many of his predecessors, to the erection or adornment of temples and other monumental works. Besides a royal residence and a tomb, Rameses III. built at Medeenet-Habou, one of the western suburbs of Thebes, a magnifi-

* This wall-painting was found at Thebes. Fig. 2 is bandaging the mummy, and Fig. 1 bringing the bandages. Fig. 4 is using the drill, 3 and 6 are polishing, and 5 painting the case.

† Dr. Samuel Birch, in Sir Gardner Wilkinson's "Ancient Egyptians," Vol. I.

cent temple, on the walls of which are depicted, in a very spirited and effective manner, the engagements, both by land and sea, of the Egyptian forces under this sovereign. In the opinion of competent critics, however, the sculptures and hieroglyphics executed by order of Rameses III. betray a certain decadence, in spite of the beauty by which they are often characterised. The arts were becoming over-refined, the usual precursor of dissolution; but this over-refinement has generally a splendour of its own, though it may be a deadly splendour. At any rate, the sculptures and paintings at Medeenet-Habou possess a value on historical grounds which must always give them an interest, apart from any consideration of their value as works of art. They depict the events of the reign with considerable vivacity, and illustrate the condition of Egypt and the surrounding nations at that period with a minuteness which we could ill afford to miss.

Among the sculptures at Medeenet-Habou are some representations of the gold and silver vases and other treasures belonging to Rameses III. It is certain that the king brought back with him from his campaigns a large amount of spoil, and thus became one of the wealthiest monarchs of his time. This has led to the supposition that the third Rameses was the sovereign alluded to by Herodotus* under the name of Rhampsinitus, of whom it is related that his riches were unparalleled. The story of the thieves who plundered his treasury is clearly fabulous, and in all probability of Greek origin; but it may have been suggested by the traditions of opulence which were associated with the name of the Egyptian king. The treasures possessed by Rameses III. consisted of gold, silver, and precious stones; they had been collected from many nations, and they were applied to the adornment of Egyptian cities. The custom of exacting an indemnity from vanquished countries is not unknown to our own times, and should mitigate any judgment we may feel disposed to pronounce on the rapacity of ancient conquerors. Rameses III. did much towards the reorganisation of Egypt and the establishment of general tranquillity; and the temples of Thebes, Memphis, and Heliopolis, were enriched by him with magnificent donations. His reign began about 1219 B.C., and lasted rather more than thirty-one years.

Four sons, all bearing the same name as their father, succeeded to the third Rameses; but their reigns were entirely undistinguished. These were followed by Rameses VIII., who to some extent redressed the anarchy into which the country had fallen, and of which the priests had taken advantage to arrogate to themselves a degree of power in the state beyond what they had previously enjoyed. The eighth Rameses conducted some foreign expeditions, which were crowned with success. He added to the great Temple of Karnak, and left behind him some historical papyri. It is believed that he derived his descent from Amunoph I., and not from his predecessors of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties. The kings of this period paid great attention to the adornment of their tombs; but the arts were declining, and no longer illustrated in vivid and lively forms the military and social history of the nation. The successors of Rameses VIII., many of whom bore the same name, appear to have been but feeble rulers, and Egypt was disturbed by family quarrels, which finally brought the Twentieth Dynasty to a close, about the year 1085 B.C.

Of the *Twenty-first Dynasty* but little is recorded. The influence of Thebes was rapidly waning, and the kings of the new line seem to have belonged to Lower Egypt, where they established their capital at Tanis, or Zoan, in the Delta, and gradually extended their power over Upper Egypt, including Thebes itself. They were apparently warriors of a priestly caste, and the names of some, who are entitled "high priests," are found in a small side temple attached to the great structure at Karnak. The growing predominance of the sacerdotal order is noticeable, as already indicated, in the latter reigns of the Twentieth Dynasty; and this, doubtless, facilitated the advent of the military pontiffs who formed the succeeding line. But Egypt had suffered not merely from the undue influence of the priests; its civilisation had been deteriorated by a long course of formalism, by the rigidity of those social rules which forbade any departure from long-accepted forms, by the pride which shrank from cordial intercourse with foreign nations, and by the division of the populace into a species of castes, not, indeed, so strict as those of India, but still sufficiently oppressive to restrain individual endeavour, and to extinguish originality. The civilisation of Egypt had effected marvels; but by this time it required a new breath of life, and for want of such a breath it languished.

The kings of the Twenty-first Dynasty did little to distinguish themselves. They were seven in number, and reigned, probably, for nearly a hundred years. A disposition to form Assyrian alliances is noticeable in them, and their feelings were perhaps less distinctly national than those of

* Book II., chap. 121.

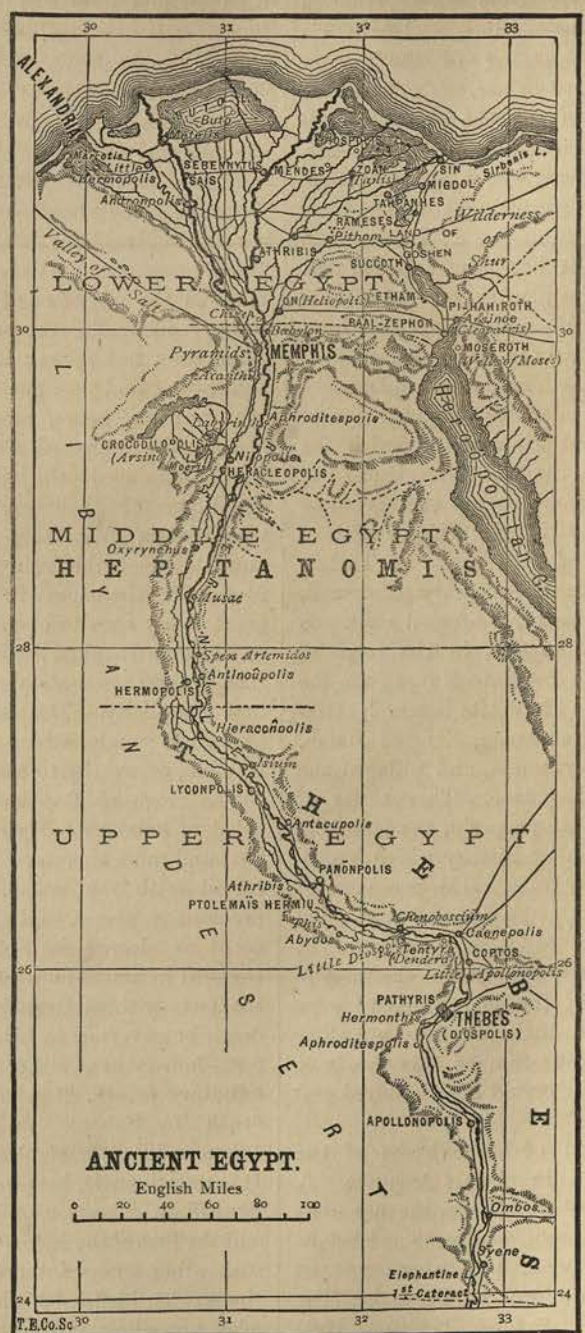
previous rulers. Indeed, the population of the Delta, where they originated, was to a great extent Semitic in its western parts. The *Twenty-second Dynasty* succeeded to power about 993 B.C. (though some have placed it a little earlier), and with this change of dominion something of the former grandeur of Egypt returned to her. The first king of the new house was Sheshonk, the Shishak of the Old Testament. He reigned twenty-one years, terminating in 972 B.C., and was a very successful monarch. The seat of government under these sovereigns is placed by Manetho at Bubastis, in the Delta; from which it has been inferred that their power arose independently of the Tanite kings, and that the two lines may for a time have been reigning simultaneously in different localities. The names found under the Twenty-second Dynasty seem to intimate that its members were of Assyrian or Babylonian race; but Sheshonk married the daughter of Pisham II., the last sovereign of the preceding dynasty. In consequence of this union, Sheshonk assumed the title of "High Priest of Amun;" and the office of high priest of Thebes, together with an important military command, was, throughout the dynasty, conferred on a son of the reigning king. It was in the reign of Sheshonk that Jeroboam fled into Egypt from the wrath of Solomon. The Bubastite monarch afterwards made war upon Rehoboam, King of Judah, and in 971 B.C. took Jerusalem, and pillaged the Temple and the royal palace. This series of events, however, falls more properly, as regards its details, into that division of history which is concerned with the Hebrew race. The conquests of Sheshonk were numerous, but apparently not equal to those of Sethi I., Rameses II., and Rameses III., though they are vauntingly recorded in the inscriptions. His successors of the same dynasty were eight in number, of whom little is related but their names. The probable duration of this line was from 993 to 847 B.C.—a period of a hundred and forty-six years.

The names of several of these kings of the Twenty-second Dynasty are clearly Assyrian. A similar characteristic is observable in the monarchs of the *Twenty-third Dynasty*, who were related to those of the Twenty-second, but whose seat of government was at Tanis, not at Bubastis. The country, indeed, was divided between rival pretenders during the whole period of this dynasty, which lasted from 847 to 758 B.C. The glory of the old Pharaohs had departed. Egypt was no more a ruling nation, the seat of arts, the great exemplar of religious belief. She had become a prey to internal discord, and her national life sickened nearly to the point of extinction. At all times, the sway of Egypt over her Asiatic provinces had been so mild as to be little more than nominal, except in the matter of tribute; and it now failed altogether. The Assyrian Empire became the predominant power, and the rulers of Egypt had enough to do in maintaining the independence of their own land. Only four kings are assigned to the house last mentioned, while but one is associated with the *Twenty-fourth Dynasty*. The name of this sovereign, as it appears in Manetho's lists, was Bocchoris, called the Wise, because of his excellent domestic legislation. He was the son of one Tnephachthus, who seems to have usurped regal power at Saïs (though his name does not appear in the catalogues of the Dynasties), and who put up a *stela* in the temple of Amun at Thebes, pronouncing a curse against Menes, the supposed first king of Egypt, for having induced the people to abandon the simplicity of their previous mode of life. It would seem from this that Tnephachthus saw and deplored the ruin of his country; but if Menes was the cause of that ruin, the cause took a great many ages to operate. We must always be on our guard against the favourite cant of moralists, that nations are destroyed by departing from their first simplicity. The simplicity of nations is barbarism; and barbarism produces nothing that is noble, or worthy to endure.

The reign of Bocchoris (who, like his father, ruled at Saïs) probably extended from 774 to 730 B.C., and must therefore have been to some extent coeval with the so-called preceding line. The probability seems to be that for some years he acted as viceroy in Saïs, while his father was engaged in martial operations against the kings of the Twenty-third Dynasty, and that on his father's death he governed in his own right. After ruling forty-four years, either as an independent or a tributary prince, Bocchoris, it is said, was put to death by Sabaco, an Ethiopian, who, having conquered Egypt, founded the *Twenty-fifth Dynasty*. It is questionable, however, whether Sabaco was the immediate successor of Bocchoris, between whom and the first of the Ethiopian monarchs it is probable that other kings intervened. Bocchoris is sometimes identified with the Asychis of Herodotus, who, according to that author, was succeeded by Anysis, a blind man, celebrated for his sufferings and ill fortune. It was in the time of this latter prince, according to Herodotus, that the country was conquered by Sabaco, who remained in possession of Egypt for fifty years, during the whole of which period Anysis lay concealed within the

marshes of the Delta, in an island which he made for himself by a mixture of earth and ashes. The story is, that while he remained in this dreary retirement the Egyptians took food to him, unknown to the Ethiopian intruder, and that, at his own request, each man brought him with the food a certain quantity of refuse, out of which he constructed an oasis of dry land in the midst of the fens.

Herodotus alleges that the existence of this island long remained a mystery, and that no one was able to find it before the time of Amyrtæus, a rebel against the Persian dominion under Artaxerxes I. This rebellion — which occurred a little before he visited Egypt, and which we shall have to describe further on —is placed by the Father of History more than seven hundred years after the age of Anysis; and we are assured that the reedy spot of earth where the blind king lay hidden, and where his chief companions were the storks, defied the efforts of all his successors during that long period to discover it. The name of the island is said to have been Elbo, and its size was ten stadia in each direction. The era of Anysis, however, was not more than between three and four hundred years before that of Amyrtæus, and it is improbable that the island should have remained hidden even for that length of time. Yet it may have escaped attention during many years, for its situation among the marshes enshrouded it in secresy, and removed it from general notice. Mannert believed that this rather mythical island was in Lake Menzaleh; while Larcher and others place it in the district called by modern writers Elearchia.



MAP OF ANCIENT EGYPT.

The lists of Manetho and Diodorus make no mention of either Asychis or Anysis, and their existence is therefore problematical, though we should not be justified in assuming that they are purely imaginary. It is singular that this comparatively recent period of ancient Egyptian history should be involved in so much obscurity—more, indeed, than surrounds some earlier epochs. The fact must be attributed to the state of anarchy which prevailed, and which, while it multiplied and confused the events to be recorded, prevented the erection of those noble monuments which the greatest of the Pharaohs left behind them, like history in stone.

Egypt, in truth, had long been broken up into a number of separate dominions, mutually antagonistic, and to some extent mutually destructive. This condition began before the close of the Twentieth Dynasty, and increased in a marked degree during succeeding ages. Sheshonk seems for a time to have restored the unity of the land; but the evil returned with still greater intensity under

the Twenty-third Dynasty, and that which succeeded it. While a prince was reigning at Saïs, the Greek form of whose name was Tnephachthus, probably Tafnecht in the original, some fourteen other princes were exercising power in as many cities, and the authority of each was circumscribed within narrow limits. Tnephachthus got possession of Memphis, reduced some of the chiefs of Upper Egypt to a position of dependency, and even conducted an expedition into Arabia. It was on this occasion that he conceived a dislike of luxury. Owing to the loss of his baggage in a wild country, he was exposed to great hardships, and, having one day eaten a humble meal with unusual relish, followed by sound and refreshing sleep, he felt persuaded that a severe simplicity of life should be the rule. Bocchoris lost the advantages obtained by his father, and, though wise as a legislator, was not powerful as a king. The martial qualities of the Egyptian people, moreover, had experienced a great decline. From the time of Rameses III., the body-guard of the Pharaohs consisted mainly of Libyans, who also, after that date, furnished the greater part of the Egyptian army.* Military adventurers, who had little in common with the mass of the populace, continually started up, established independent governments, and wasted the strength of the country in exhausting rivalries. This deplorable state of things invited the aggression of neighbouring monarchs, and the ruler of Ethiopia saw the opportunity which events had opened to him. The course of African history was now reversed. In the days of Egyptian predominance and grandeur, the arms of the Pharaohs had been carried far into the wilds of Ethiopia. Their religious dogmas were imposed upon the people; their temples were carved out of the rocks, and reflected in the waters, of the Upper Nile. Egyptian magistrates interpreted Egyptian laws beyond the Tropic of Cancer, and in the vicinity of the Sixth Cataract. The viceroys of the Theban sovereigns bore the title of Princes of Cush, or Ethiopia; and the manners of Egypt were planted in the southern country, the inhabitants of which were regarded by their conquerors as an inferior race.

ANYSIS CONCEALED IN THE MARSHES OF THE DELTA.

Few things in ancient history are more obscure than the character of the African Ethiopians, and the nature of their relations with Egypt. The boundaries of their country were very ill-defined, or rather were not defined at all, and the term Ethiopia was often so used as to include the

* Max Duncker's History of Antiquity, Vol. III., chap. 3.

entire southern parts of Africa, from the Red Sea to the Atlantic. In a more particular sense, however, Ethiopia was that immense tract of land on the banks of the Upper Nile and its tributaries which is now comprehended under the names of Nubia, Sennaar, Kordofan, and Northern Abyssinia. The people were a Hamitic race, and the country was on that account called Cush by the Hebrews. Both in the Bible and in classical writers, the Ethiopians are spoken of as tall and comely. Although they were dark-skinned, with curly hair, their appearance was different from that of negroes, and it is evident that they were capable of considerable intellectual development. Their reputation for virtue and piety stood very high among the Greeks. Homer calls them the most just of men, and says they were the favourites of the gods, who feasted among them twelve days every year. Diodorus Siculus affirms that they were the first who worshipped the Divine Powers, and that, for this reason, their territories had never been invaded by a foreign enemy; which, however, is not historically true. But the Greeks knew so little of Ethiopia that they imagined a great deal. They supposed it to be the region where Poseidon the sea-god held his court—a land blest with a perfect climate, and untroubled by either vice or sorrow. They believed that certain parts were inhabited by beings of wonderful character and marvellous aspect; and it was generally to Ethiopia that they reverted when they would hold up to the admiration of the world a country having some quality of the divine, and conducting men, as it were, into the very presence of the gods.

To Ethiopia, as to Egypt, the Nile was the great fertiliser, the great wealth-bringer, and the great civiliser. Nearly all the Ethiopian cities of importance were built upon its banks, and the most flourishing part of the country, excluding that which bordered upon Egypt, and which is often regarded as mainly Egyptian in its character, was the large tract of land called the isle of Meroë, formed either by two affluents of the Nile, the Astapus and Astaboras, or, as some think, by an immense bend of the great river itself. The parts remote from the stream were given up to pasture, and inhabited by a race of herdsmen; beyond these were jungles and deserts, where rough and savage men hunted wild beasts and ostriches, and turned their spoils to profitable account. Meroë was the name of a city, as well as of the so-called island, which was in truth a peninsula, and appears at times to have had a separate existence as an independent kingdom. The city has been identified with the modern town of Assour, situated above the confluence of the Astaboras (or Takkazzie) and the Nile. The ruins here observable are in a great state of dilapidation; but they evidently are those of temples and pyramids, covering a large extent of ground, and giving testimony to the existence in this region, at a remote antiquity, of a high degree of civilisation. Further ruins are to be seen in other parts of Upper Nubia, and the similarity of the architecture to that of Egypt is very noticeable, though the style is less refined.

That the religion of the two countries was analogous, if not identical, is obvious from the sculptures, in which Isis and other deities of the more northern land are frequently represented. The Ethiopians, like the Egyptians, were an extremely religious people. Indeed, their hierarchical system was more predominant over the whole political and social state than (except at a few special epochs) we find to be the case at Thebes or Memphis. The secular government was monarchical; but the priests were above the king. According to Diodorus, the priests, whenever they thought proper, sent a message to the king, commanding him to die, as the gods, whom no one should oppose, had communicated their pleasure to that effect. The mandate was always obeyed without a murmur until the reign of Ergamenes, a contemporary of Ptolemy Philadelphus, in the third century before the Christian era. This monarch, who had studied the philosophy of Greece, and was therefore of a sceptical turn, refused compliance with so tyrannical an order, occupied the chief temple with soldiers, put the priests to death in his stead, and abolished the custom. But a deeply-rooted superstition is not so easily destroyed; and the priests seem to have afterwards recovered their power, which exists even now amongst their barbarous descendants. The Egyptians constantly resisted such assumptions; to the Ethiopians they were natural. Yet the connection between the nations is apparent. Their religious beliefs were substantially the same, and the sacred language of Egypt was that of Ethiopia likewise.

Which of these African lands was the originator of the civilisation and the faith common to both, is a matter with respect to which opinion is much divided. The view most generally entertained in the ancient world was that Ethiopia was the source whence Egypt derived all by which she was afterwards distinguished. The religion we call Egyptian arose, according to this belief, at Meroë, and religious colonies were sent down the Nile in the direction of the Delta. A tradition preserved by Diodorus affirmed that Osiris led a colony from Ethiopia into Egypt, and that the latter country received from the

former the practice of deifying kings (which, by the bye, it is doubtful if the Egyptians ever did), the method of hieroglyphical writing, the art of embalming, the whole sacred ritual, and the conventional forms of sculpture. Herodotus, however, says that the only gods worshipped at Meroë were Zeus and Dionysus,—the Jupiter and Bacchus of the Romans,—the Ammon (or Amun) and Osiris of the Egyptians.* To these gods the Ethiopians paid great honour, and to the former in particular they committed the guidance of their affairs. In the city of Meroë there was an oracle of Ammon, which determined the warlike expeditions of the people. When it commanded them to go to war, they did so implicitly; and in whatever direction they were bidden to march, thither they immediately turned their arms. The worship of Ammon was probably of Ethiopian origin, though other portions of the Egyptian religious system may not have been. A solemn festival took place every year at Thebes, called the procession of the Holy Ship, in which the shrine of the ram-headed Ammon was carried over to the western side of the Nile, and brought back after a few days, in commemoration, it was said, of the advent of the god from Ethiopia, by way of the river. Sculptures representing this ceremony are found in the ruined temples, not only of Egypt, but of Nubia. The ritual of Meroë may have been introduced into Egypt by some of the eighteen Ethiopian kings who, according to Herodotus, reigned in the more northern country before the time of Sesostris. It is probable, at any rate, that Egypt was to some extent a debtor to its southern neighbour, and that rudiments of a spiritual system floated downward with the current of the Nile.

Nevertheless, the civilisation and the religious doctrines of Egypt were undoubtedly more complex and exalted than those of Ethiopia; and when the Pharaohs invaded the latter country, they took with them a larger dowry than they had received. Some modern authorities, indeed, contend that Ethiopia was in all respects the pupil of Egypt. We have already seen that the martial sovereigns of Thebes repeatedly entered the vast land which stretched beyond their southern borders, established their influence there, and modified the faith and habits of the people. The Ethiopians were in every way less powerful than the Egyptians, and were compelled to submit to a yoke which they may have detested, but which for many ages they had neither the means nor the opportunity to cast off. This subjection continued for about five hundred years, but ceased before 1100 B.C., when Ethiopia became once more independent. Although, however, the sovereignty of Egypt no longer existed, Egyptian civilisation continued to give form and colour to Ethiopian life, as that of Rome prevailed for many years among the nations of North-western Europe, even after the withdrawal of the Roman legions. The capital of Ethiopia under her own kings was Napata, near Mount Barkal—a place called Neb in the hieroglyphics, and Merua or Berua by the natives themselves. This city had in former times been adorned by Amunoph III. and Rameses II. with magnificent structures; and the religion, official manners, and ceremonial writing of the inhabitants still remained Egyptian, although the popular language, as before, was native. The name of the first independent king of Ethiopia of whom we have any record was Pianchi Miamun; and on a memorial stone, discovered among the ruins of Napata, it is set forth that, in the twenty-first year of his reign, in the month Thot, Pianchi received information that Tnephachthus, of Saïs and Memphis, had possessed himself of a large amount of territory, that the princes and lords of the cities were like dogs before his feet, and that he respected those only who acknowledged his supremacy. This statement gives us a vivid idea of the division of Egypt amongst a great variety of rulers, and of the efforts made by Tnephachthus to re-establish something like unity. The petty sovereigns of Upper Egypt, not liking this ambitious design, yet feeling themselves too weak to dispute it, sent frequent messages to Pianchi, representing the state of affairs, and apparently soliciting his aid. Tnephachthus was accordingly attacked; and thus, probably for the first time, the Ethiopians invaded Egypt.

The action of the petty princes may perhaps be traced to the old jealousy between Upper and Lower Egypt. The people of the former believed that their antiquity and importance were greater than those of the other division. Their blood was doubtless purer than the blood of the Northern Egyptians, whose geographical position, near to Asia, led to numerous Semitic alliances and colonisations. Moreover, the long predominance of Thebes had cherished this sentiment of superiority, and made it peculiarly galling to accept the rule, or even the patronage, of a monarch whose capital was at Saïs, and whose immediate subjects were natives of the Delta. The princes of Upper Egypt found a greater affinity to themselves in the sovereign of Ethiopia than in the hybrids of the extreme north; and it was therefore more endurable to them that Pianchi should enter their land than

* Book II., chap. 29.

that Tnephachthus should demand their allegiance. The invasion of the Ethiopian monarch was on the whole attended by great success, though a serious defeat was experienced at Ashmunein. In a year or two, the whole of Lower Egypt was reduced, and even the great city of Memphis was taken by the stranger, who attacked it from the river with his fleet. Tnephachthus had assisted the Memphites by throwing 8,000 of his warriors into the city during the siege; but he now lost heart, and made submission to the conqueror. Having thus prevailed over all opposition, Pianchi loaded his ships with gold, silver, copper, and other valuables, and returned up the Nile, the people of the southern province hailing him as the humbler of Lower Egypt and the friend of Thebes. The date of this expedition was about 760 B.C.

Notwithstanding the successes of Pianchi and the submission of Tnephachthus, the latter still retained possession of his sovereignty at Saïs, and exercised power over the northern part of the Delta, if, indeed, he did not afterwards extend it as far as Thebes. He appears to have left a kingdom of some importance to his son, Bocchoris, already mentioned, who, however, had no genius for war, and looked with indifference on the growing power of Ethiopia in the one direction, and the enormous military force of Assyria in the other. The invasion of Egypt by Sabaco, King of Ethiopia, was one of the results of this weakness; though, as we have said, it is doubtful whether Sabaco was the conqueror of Bocchoris, or of some later monarch. It is certain, however, that Egypt was subjected by a sovereign from the Upper Nile, who was apparently the second successor of Pianchi. This was a far more genuine conquest than the former. Pianchi does not appear to have penetrated so far as Saïs; he made no attempt to hold the country he had overrun, but was apparently glad to leave it with his booty as soon as he had obtained the homage of Tnephachthus and his vassals. Sabaco took complete possession of Egypt, and established a permanent rule there. His government was characterised by singular mildness. Though a military dictator, he did away with the punishment of death, and caused those who had been capitally condemned to work in chains in the cities; being of opinion (says Diodorus) that this would be of advantage both to the criminals themselves and to the community. He caused dams to be raised and canals to be cut by forced labour; and the condition of the country was greatly improved by the liberal policy of its conqueror. Sabaco respected the religion and the national customs of the Egyptians, and retained the leading chiefs in their positions of command. He executed works of restoration at the temples of Thebes and Memphis, and was long renowned among the Egyptians for his piety, clemency, and justice. These qualities are illustrated in a remarkable story related by Herodotus. The king had in his sleep a vision of a man who counselled him to bring together all the priests of Egypt, and cut every one of them asunder. It appeared to him, however, that the gods were in this way tempting him to commit an act of sacrilege, which would certainly draw down upon his head some terrible punishment. Before he left Ethiopia, he had been told by an oracle that he was to reign fifty years over Egypt. That time had now passed; the dream had come to trouble him; and he voluntarily withdrew from the land.* The truth of this story may be doubtful; but the mere fact of its existence shows the estimation in which Sabaco was held by the very people he had overthrown.

The conquest of Egypt by Sabaco took place about 730 B.C. His death is referred to the year 717†; but in that case his reign in Egypt was not longer than thirteen years. It was probably in the time of Sabaco, though possibly in that of his successor (for the point is incapable of being exactly fixed), that the first hostile contact between Egypt and Assyria occurred. The Egyptian monarch made a treaty with Hoshea, the last King of Israel, for resisting the encroachments of Assyria; but the sovereign of that empire—either Shalmaneser IV. or Sargon—defeated his troops (probably in the year 719), and so put an end to the alliance. The power of Sabaco, however, was not broken. If, according to the legend preserved by Herodotus, he quitted the land before his death, he at any rate left the sovereignty over it to his son, Shabataka, the Sebichus of Manetho (sometimes called Sabaco II.), who was succeeded by Tirhakah, a monarch of great distinction in the annals of Egypt. There can be no doubt that the country of the Pharaohs was renovated by its Ethiopian dynasty. The people had for several generations been effete; their splendid resources had been wasted by disunion and anarchy; and it might well have seemed as if the glories of Thebes and Memphis would never be restored. The energy of the Ethiopians, however, gave new life and concentration to the ancient dominion, and restored its unity, though at the expense of its independence. Tirhakah was not the son of Shabataka; he appears to have been an usurper; but, like the two

* Herodotus, II. 139.

† Duncker's History of Antiquity.

monarchs who preceded him, he was an Ethiopian, and remains of his buildings, including a grand temple in the Egyptian style, are yet to be seen at Napata. He obtained the sovereign power in 703 B.C., according to some accounts; according to others, at an earlier date; according to others, again, at a later. From an inscription in the temple at Medeenet-Habou, it would seem that he had to conquer Egypt before he could reign over it; but ultimately he established a powerful monarchy there, and became one of the great warrior-princes of his time. His name is also written Tehrak, and (by Greek authors) Tarcus, Taracus, and Tearchon.

The necessity of opposing Assyria was as apparent to Tirhakah as it had been to Sabaco. He marched to the support of Hezekiah, King of Judah, when the latter was attacked by Sennacherib, about 698 B.C.; but it is not absolutely certain whether he came into collision with the forces of the Assyrian, though, from one of Sennacherib's inscriptions, it would appear that such was the case, and that the Egyptians were defeated. The statements made to Herodotus by the Egyptian priests were that their countrymen overcame the army of Sennacherib, at Pelusium, by the help of a miracle which may be compared with what is related in the Old Testament concerning the same monarch.* It is said that there was a priest-king ruling in Egypt at the same time as Tirhakah. Herodotus speaks of him as Sethos, a priest of Hephæstus (Ptah), and says that he despised and neglected the members of the warrior class, from whom he took the lands they had possessed under all previous kings. They accordingly refused to aid him when Sennacherib marched against Egypt, and it was then that, in response to the prayers of Sethos, the miracle was worked, by which the quivers and bowstrings of the enemy were eaten away by field-mice, together with the thongs of their shields, so that on the following morning they were put to disastrous flight.† The priests from whom Herodotus received his information, and whom he trusted too implicitly, told him nothing whatever about Tirhakah; which may have been owing to jealousy of the Ethiopians, or to the monarch not having been remarkable for piety. With respect to Sethos, great uncertainty prevails. He is not mentioned in Manetho's lists, nor on any of the monuments, and was perhaps not so much a king as a high-priest of more than usual power and authority. It may be, however, that, during the early years of Tirhakah's reign, Sethos ruled in Lower Egypt, and that after his death the Ethiopian succeeded to his dominions.

The probability is that after the discomfiture of the army of Sennacherib, Tirhakah was enabled to extend his sway over Western Asia. In the Egyptian and Ethiopian monuments of Tirhakah, the Assyrians are represented undergoing defeat, or suffering captivity; and the latter interpretation is probably correct. It is questionable whether, as some Greek writers assert, Tirhakah extended his conquests into Europe as far as the Pillars of Hercules; but that he was a very powerful monarch is certain. Nevertheless, he found a formidable opponent in the Assyrian king, Esar-haddon, the son and successor of Sennacherib. The ambition of Assyria was still menacing to those countries on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean which bordered on Egypt; and Tirhakah seems to have considered it a matter of policy to take up arms, probably in combination with Tyre, Judah, and Samaria, against so grave a danger. A struggle ensued, in which the Egyptians and their allies were worsted. Tirhakah was compelled to retreat precipitately to his own land, whither he was followed by the conqueror. Close to the figure, supposed to be that of Rameses the Great, which, together with a number of hieroglyphics, is still to be seen sculptured on the rocks at the mouth of the Lycus, in Syria, are two other figures and inscriptions, which have been ascertained to be those of Sennacherib and Esar-haddon, the latter commemorative of his subjugation of Egypt. Esar-haddon's successor, Asshur-bani-pal, states on one of his monuments that his father conquered Egypt and Cush (Ethiopia), carried away innumerable prisoners, and annexed the whole land to Assyria; that he altered the earlier names of the cities; that he appointed twenty viceroys to govern on his behalf; and that he enforced the payment of tribute. The satraps thus set over the Egyptians were for the most part members of important native families who were apparently disaffected to the rule of Tirhakah, as being that of an Ethiopian, but who, by an inconsistency not at all unparalleled, were willing to serve the Assyrian.

The date of these events is generally assigned to the year 669 B.C., though it may have been a little earlier. Tirhakah had received a terrible blow, but he was not entirely crushed. He rallied in the following year, and again established his authority. It would seem that Asshur-bani-pal exaggerated the achievements of his father in stating that he subdued not only Egypt, but Cush.

* II. Kings, xix.; II. Chronicles, xxxii.; Isaiah, xxxvii.
† Herodotus, II. 141.

The probability is that Tirhakah remained in safety among his Ethiopian subjects, and was thus enabled to organise a fresh campaign. He had soon to contend with Asshur-bani-pal himself, for Esar-haddon died shortly after. The new king of Assyria received the homage, and doubtless the military assistance, of the petty princes at that time reigning in Syria and Cyprus, and, passing into Egypt, defeated the forces which were sent to meet him. Tirhakah himself was at Memphis when this disaster occurred to his lieutenant. He at once fell back on Thebes, but was vigorously pressed by the Assyrian monarch, who took the city, restored the twenty princes on whom his father had bestowed viceregal power, and returned to Nineveh with a rich booty, leaving a portion of his army at Thebes. Tirhakah again retired to Napata, his Ethiopian capital, and once more meditated an attack on his successful rival. As an inducement to this attempt, the conduct of Asshur-bani-pal may have contributed in some degree. He possibly vexed the people by heavy exactions, and he certainly mortified their self-love by keeping a number of Assyrian troops in Egypt after the conclusion of the war. In a little while, some of the vassals whom he had himself appointed, and who enjoyed a species of regal power, each in his own district, entered into secret communication with Tirhakah, and the conspirators sent a messenger to the Ethiopian sovereign, requesting him to return to Egypt, and resume his sovereign power. At the head of these malcontents was Necho, chief of the districts of Memphis and Saïs. But the messenger was intercepted on his way to the south, and Necho, with some others, was captured, put in chains, and sent to Nineveh. The Assyrian soldiers committed great cruelties on the people of Memphis, Mendes, and Tanis, and broke down the towers on their walls. Tirhakah, who seems to have already set out on his new expedition, again retreated to Napata, where he abdicated in favour of his son—probably in 666 B.C. Of his death we have no certain information; but it may have been in 664.

Fresh troubles were in waiting for Asshur-bani-pal. After the defeat of the conspiracy, the Assyrian king restored Necho to the chieftainship of Saïs, and bestowed on his son the government of another canton. But the spirit of disaffection was not destroyed. The throne of Ethiopia was now filled by a prince named Urdamane, who is described in the monuments of Asshur-bani-pal as a son of Sabaco. Whether he was really so, or was the son of Tirhakah in favour of whom that potentate resigned, cannot be stated with any precision. It appears, however, that he entered Egypt with a force of Ethiopians, aided by at least some of the petty princes, took Thebes, defeated the Assyrians before Memphis, and, shutting them up in the city, compelled their surrender. A messenger was hastily despatched to Nineveh to apprise the king of what had happened, and Asshur-bani-pal at once set out for Egypt in person, that he might restore his shaken dominion. Urdamane retreated before him, retiring from Memphis to Thebes. The princes whom the Assyrian monarch had placed over Egypt, but who had twice intrigued with Ethiopia, made humble submission, and the sovereign from the Tigris marched in triumph over the whole of the enemy's country. From the royal city of Thebes, according to his own account preserved in the graven records of his reign, he carried away gold, silver, and precious stones, the treasures of the palace, men and women, and two great obelisks which stood before the gates of the temple, and which were adorned with beautiful sculptures. This heavy discomfiture of the Ethiopians and Egyptians took place in 663 B.C.

Having again asserted his power in the land of the Nile, Asshur-bani-pal proceeded to secure it by introducing into the country a considerable number of settlers from other conquered regions. The government of Egypt was once more confided to a body of chieftains charged with the administration of particular districts; but it may be a question whether the number of these rulers was as large as it had been. Herodotus affirms that twelve kings succeeded to the government of Egypt on the death of the priest-king, Sethos; for his informants omitted all reference to Tirhakah, to his successor or successors, and to the long predominance of Esar-haddon and Asshur-bani-pal. The so-called kings were evidently nomarchs—rulers of nomes, or cantons. That such rulers were appointed by the Assyrian conquerors, to the number of twenty, we have just seen; and these twenty may afterwards have been reduced to twelve. The narrative in Herodotus, however, gives us to understand that the kings were elected by the Egyptians themselves, and that they formed a kind of federation. "United by intermarriages," says the Greek historian, "they ruled Egypt in peace, having entered into engagements with one another not to depose any of their number, nor to aim at any aggrandisement of one above the rest, but to dwell together in perfect amity." These rulers may not improbably have contracted mutual relations for their greater strength and independence; yet it is obvious, from the general course of events, that they

PSAMMETICHUS AND THE BRONZE HELMET.

were the nominees of Asshur-bani-pal. It is the tendency of such nominees to aim at regal state, and to oppose their patron whenever they think there is an opportunity of casting off his yoke. Such was the case with some among the twelve viceroys of Egypt who had been clothed with delegated power by the Assyrian king. Taking advantage of a revolt in Babylon, and of other troubles, the more enterprising spirits of the Egyptian official hierarchy conceived the project of re-establishing a native kingdom, such as had existed in former times. The leader of the movement was Psammetichus (otherwise called Psamatik), a son of Necho, who, on the death of his father, about 664 B.C., had succeeded to the government of Saïs. He had enjoyed that government, however, some eleven years before his ambition disclosed itself.

Of this prince Herodotus tells a story, which, semi-mythical as it is, probably contains some degree of truth. He says that the reason why the kings entered into strict engagements with one another was because an oracle had declared that he among them who should pour in Vulcan's temple a libation from a cup of bronze—apparently not a very unlikely circumstance—would become monarch of the whole of Egypt. For some time, the twelve dealt honourably by one another; but, on a certain day when they were worshipping in the temple of Vulcan, the high-priest accidentally brought forth only eleven of the golden goblets required in the ceremony. Psammetichus was the last to be served with a libation, and, finding that there was no cup for him, took off his bronze helmet, and stretched it out to receive the liquor, thus fulfilling the first part of the oracle. It is expressly stated by Herodotus, who doubtless followed the information given him by the ecclesiastics, that the action of Psammetichus was prompted by no crafty design, but that, nevertheless, when the eleven other kings came to consider what had occurred, and to remember the prophecy, they doubted at first whether they should not put their coadjutor to death. Finally, however, they resolved to banish him to the marshes, under strict commands that he should on no account leave them, or hold any communication with the rest of Egypt. Psammetichus, considering himself to have been treated with great injustice, determined on revenge, but first consulted the oracle of Latona in the city of Buto. Inquiring as to the means of vengeance, he received for answer that "vengeance would come from the sea when brazen men should appear." Not long afterwards, certain Carian and Ionian pirates (men of Greek race) were carried by stress of weather on to the Egyptian coast. They were clad in brazen armour, and were reported to the banished king as men of brass. Perceiving that the oracle of Latona was about to be consummated, Psammetichus made friendly advances to the strangers, and by their aid vanquished the eleven other rulers, and became the one undisputed sovereign of the land.*

The account given by Diodorus Siculus is that Psammetichus enriched himself, and increased his power, by trading with the Phœnicians and Greeks; that the allied kings, growing jealous of him, attacked his dominions; and that, after a prolonged war, Psammetichus conquered all his enemies, and acquired supreme power throughout Egypt.† The truth is that this prince was originally one of the nomarchs (whether twenty or twelve) appointed by Asshur-bani-pal, and that the internecine wars were owing to the fact that some of the others opposed his insubordination to the Assyrian king. In the prosecution of this struggle (which lasted about three years), it is very probable that Psammetichus had the assistance of Greek mercenaries. According to the Assyrian cuneiform inscriptions, Gyges of Lydia entered into an alliance with the ruler of Saïs, and sent an army to his assistance against the sovereign of Nineveh. Ionians, Carians, and other Greeks, may also have helped, attracted by the hope of booty, or by the commercial advantages which Psammetichus held out. Foreign auxiliaries were employed in Egypt, even in the times of her greatest kings; but they belonged to nations that had been subjugated, and were thus compelled to aid in upholding the empire of which they formed a part. This was the first time that mere hired troops had been employed by an Egyptian ruler; at any rate, it is the first time that can be precisely fixed. The military spirit had for a long while been decaying among the people of Egypt, and the engagement of mercenary warriors intensified the evil it was designed to palliate. In acknowledgment of the assistance he had received from the Ionian and Carian strangers, Psammetichus (as Herodotus relates) conferred upon them certain lands termed "the Camp," which were situated opposite to each other on the two sides of the river. For many years, the Greek settlers continued to occupy the places assigned them, which lay near the sea, a little below the city of Bubastis, on the Pelusiac branch of the Nile—a post which seems to indicate that they were needed as a protection against attack from Asia; but, at a subsequent period, Amasis removed them to Memphis. Probably

* Herodotus, II. 147; 151, 2. † Diodorus, I. 65, 6.

there were other foreign colonies also, for the new king had little faith in his Egyptian subjects. The assumption of supreme power by Psammetichus, after his conquest of the other nomarchs—the final defeat of whom took place at Momemphis, in the Western Delta—was perhaps about the year 650 B.C. The *Twenty-sixth Dynasty* (Saïs) commences with the reign of this king.

It appears from the monuments that Psammetichus married a princess who was partly of Theban and partly of Ethiopian family; and this fact may perhaps account for the rulers of the southern kingdom making no further attempts on Egypt. Psammetichus was an able and politic sovereign; but his preference for foreigners, though prompted by liberal ideas, and in some respects productive of good results, gave great offence to his native subjects. Besides the men of Grecian race, he engaged Phœnician sailors, and caused a certain number of Egyptian children to be instructed in the Hellenic tongue, that they might act as interpreters. Psammetichus perceived the growing importance of the Greek nationality, and may even have foreseen the counterpoise to Asiatic predominance which would in time result from the more free and active life of Europe. Whatever his motive, he opposed that spirit of exclusiveness which had always been one of the weak points in the Egyptian character; but he opposed it with a vehemence which involved him in some trouble. The principal military event of his reign (after the battles by which power was secured) was the long war in Syria and the neighbouring countries, when the Philistine city of Ashdod, or Azotus, which had been taken by the Assyrian king, Sargon, while held by a garrison of Egyptians and Ethiopians, was recovered by the Egyptians. Herodotus relates that the siege of this place by the army of Psammetichus lasted twenty-nine years; but the statement is probably an exaggeration. Ashdod, however, was a very strong city, as the name implies—the strongest city of the Philistines; and, being situated between Egypt and Assyria, it had a strategical importance for both countries, which frequently contended for its possession. There had been no previous siege of so immense a duration, according to Herodotus; but Psammetichus was determined not to give up his design, and at length (about 630 B.C.) compelled the submission of the stubborn fortress.

It was during this war, though probably not until after the capture of Ashdod, that a serious revolt took place among the Egyptian troops. The length of the siege had excited their discontent, and the favouritism shown to the Greeks had inflamed their jealousy. They were finally exasperated beyond endurance by being placed in the left wing, while to the Greeks was assigned the post of honour on the right. Assuming an attitude of defiance, they quitted the camp, and joined the rest of the army in Egypt, the battalions of which were also in an angry mood, because they had been detained beyond the usual period of service before the border fortresses of Marea, Daphnæ of Pelusium, and Elephantine. The united bodies, numbering 240,000 men according to Herodotus, then withdrew into Ethiopia. Psammetichus, alarmed at so serious a defection, sent a messenger to the malcontents to recall them to their duty, and, finding this ineffectual, followed them himself by water as far as Elephantine, whence he despatched some of his most faithful Egyptians, accompanied by a number of Greeks, into Lower Ethiopia. Overtaking the mutineers beyond Aboccis, near Abousimbel, these emissaries conjured them to return, exhorting them not to desert the gods of their country, their wives, and their families. They replied, however, with scoffs and boasts, and, continuing their march into Upper Ethiopia, received, in return for their services, a considerable extent of territory. Such is the story as told, with a few variations of detail, by Herodotus, Diodorus Siculus, and other ancient authors. There is no reason to doubt its substantial accuracy; but the number of the mutineers seems larger than is probable. So great a force as 240,000 men (or, as Diodorus more vaguely states it, "upwards of 200,000") would presumably have attempted some internal revolution, instead of simply quitting the kingdom. Still, it cannot be questioned that their numbers were considerable, and the military power of the Ethiopian monarch was increased in the same degree as that of Psammetichus was weakened. The malcontents are believed to have been settled beyond Meroë, so as to be far removed from the Egyptian frontier; and their descendants, retaining the characteristics of strangers, and the title of the Deserters, long continued to dwell there.

The depletion of his army obliged Psammetichus to discontinue the Syrian or Phœnician campaign, and to buy off the Scythians who had overrun Assyria, and were threatening to invade Egypt. The king then turned his attention to works of peace. Great encouragement was given to the arts, and a revival of Egyptian genius is to be noticed in the productions of this period, especially in sculpture. Important additions were made to the temples, particularly to those of Memphis, which were adorned with great magnificence.

Psammetichus built also at Karnak, and on the island of Philæ. At Saïs he reared for himself a splendid palace, and throughout his reign the utmost honour was paid to the sacred bull of Memphis, which, under the name of Apis, was regarded as a type of Osiris. The bull so called was distinguished from others by certain marks; and when the consecrated animal died, another similarly spotted or variegated was sought for by the priests. The dead beasts received a superb funeral; *stelæ*, or inscribed tablets, were devoted to their memory, and the bodies were deposited in a sumptuous building at Memphis, to which successive monarchs added. Psammetichus built a new hall for the living Apis, the walls of which were decorated with noble sculptures, while the roof was supported by colossal figures, twelve cubits high, representing the king himself in the character of Osiris. This was the Apeum. He also restored and enlarged the sepulchral edifice devoted to the deified bulls, which was approached by a double row of more than a hundred sphinxes, and was called the Serapeum. The latter structure consisted of a series of galleries and chambers, in which the bulls had been buried from the time of Amunoph III., and in which they continued to be buried down to the period of the Roman dominion.

In the time of Strabo (who is thought to have been born about sixty years B.C.), the Serapeum was seriously threatened by the advancing sands of the desert, which afterwards entirely engulfed it. The ruins of the mighty structure, however, were disinterred in 1851-2 by M. Auguste Mariette, a gentleman then employed at the Louvre, who had been sent to Egypt to collect Coptic manuscripts for the French Government. In the plains of Sakkara, near the site of Memphis, vast ranges of chambers, some thousands of funereal monuments, sarcophagi, and statues, a hundred and forty-one sphinxes, an immense number of inscribed tablets and articles of jewellery, the mummies of the deceased bulls, with two of human beings, sepulchral figures, and votive offerings, were brought once more into the light of day. The tombs and mortuary chapels belonging to some of the later reigns were particularly magnificent, and the *stelæ* have thrown considerable light on the chronology of ancient Egypt. When the entrance to one of these great sepulchral chambers was effected by M. Mariette, the finger-marks of the Egyptian who had closed up the last stone of the wall were still visible in the cement, while on the sand of the floor were yet to be seen the impressions of the naked feet of the workmen who had deposited the deified bull in his tomb upwards of three thousand years before.

Psammetichus died in 610 B.C. He must therefore have reigned as the sole and independent sovereign of Egypt about forty years—a lengthened period, marked by important facts, and characterised by some revival of the ancient spirit. But the distinctive genius of the people had been greatly impaired; foreign influences were asserting themselves in many directions; and the Pharaohs of an earlier day would have looked with foreboding on the obvious tendency of events.

CHAPTER X.

THE LATER DYNASTIES OF EGYPT.

Accession of Necho—His Wars with Josiah and Nebuchadnezzar—Circumnavigation of Africa by the Egyptian Fleet—Reign of Psammetichus II.—Accession of Apries (Pharaoh-Hophra)—Relations of that Monarch to Judah, to Babylon, and to Hebrew Prophecies—Expedition of Apries against the Greek Colonies of Cyrene—Revolt of Egyptian Troops—Death of Apries—Amasis, King of Egypt—State of the Country at this Period—Policy of Amasis: the Greeks in Egypt—Architectural and Sculptural Works of Amasis—Character and Habits of the King—Intercourse between Egypt and Greece—Alliance with Crœsus of Lydia against Cyrus of Persia—Apocryphal Narratives with respect to Cambyses and Amasis—Persian Invasion of Egypt, and Death of Amasis—Reign of Psammetichus III.: Subjection of Egypt by Persia: the Twenty-seventh Dynasty—Conduct of Cambyses—Revolts of the Egyptians—Re-establishment of Native Rule—The Twenty-eighth, Twenty-ninth, and Thirtieth Dynasties—Wars with Persia—Second Persian Conquest—The Thirty first Dynasty—Conquest of Egypt by Alexander the Great.

When Necho, the son of Psammetichus, succeeded to the throne of Egypt, in 610 B.C., he found himself in possession of a realm which, though feeble in comparison with the same country in the days of Rameses II., had yet been rescued from the state of disunion prevailing not long before, and from the miserable condition of dependence which made it the sport, now of Ethiopia, and now of Assyria, as well as the battle-ground of both. The Assyrian power had broken up, and Necho was able to carry

his standards into Asia with considerable success. But before engaging in any expeditions, he reorganised his army, and fitted out a magnificent fleet. The susceptibilities of his native subjects were duly consulted, as they certainly had not been in the previous reign, while at the same time the Greeks were treated with the consideration due to great services and manifest capacity. Having thus strengthened himself, Necho directed his forces towards Syria. He appears to have considered that if he suffered all the southern possessions of Assyria to pass under the sway of Babylon, the latter monarchy would be as troublesome to Egypt as the former had been. Placing his army, therefore, on board the ships he had provided, he sailed along the Philistine coast, and landed in the neighbourhood of Mount Carmel, on the borders of Phœnicia. In this way he avoided the wearisome and dangerous route through the desert, and kept his men fresh for the struggles which awaited them when they had penetrated into the country on which he desired to operate.

It does not appear that Necho (the Pharaoh-Necho of the Old Testament) had any wish to attack Josiah, King of Judah, in whose realm he now was. He wanted nothing more than to pass through the intervening territory into Syria, as many of his predecessors had done; and this he may have supposed would be granted him. Josiah, however, either fearing to offend the northern sovereign, to whom he may have stood in the relation of a tributary, or resenting the violation of his kingdom by a foreigner, went forth to give battle. Necho was marching through the great plain of Esdraelon, at the foot of Mount Carmel, when the two hosts encountered. The result was disastrous to Josiah. His army was crushed, and himself mortally wounded in the valley of Megiddo. This event happened in 609 B.C., and it conferred on Necho a high reputation for martial capacity. It is stated by Herodotus that the Egyptian monarch sent the armour which he wore at the battle to Branchidæ, in Milesia, as an offering to Apollo. If such was really the fact, it was probably intended as a recognition of the services rendered on that occasion, as on others, by the Greek auxiliaries, and may, perhaps, be taken as a sign that Necho was to some extent Hellenised in his religious views. Having overthrown the Jewish king, he continued his march into Syria, where fortune still attended on his arms. His dealings with the Jews will be related in a subsequent chapter: we are here concerned with his operations against the Babylonian sovereign, Nabopolassar, who, after the fall of Nineveh, had succeeded to much of the Assyrian dominion. In a short space of time, Necho subdued the whole of Syria between the borders of Phœnicia and Carchemish, on the Euphrates. At Carchemish he left a strong garrison, and then returned to Egypt. It is a singular and indeed unaccountable fact, that no record of these great victories is to be found on the Egyptian monuments, although the name of Necho is mentioned as the ruler of both the upper and the lower country.

Carchemish fell before the Egyptians in 608 B.C.; but it was not destined to remain in the possession of Necho. The Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar advanced against the Egyptian forces in that city; and Necho, fearing to lose what he had so recently won, again marched towards the Euphrates in 605 B.C. He soon came into collision with the enemy, who inflicted on him a severe defeat, recovered Carchemish, and, by a rapid succession of triumphs, drove back the Egyptians to the extreme southern limits of Syria.* Necho was unable to retrieve this blow, and indeed does not appear to have made any further attempt in the same direction. Although the great military projects with which he began his reign were doomed to final discomfiture, he left behind him an enduring reputation as a wise and energetic ruler. He aimed at the development of commerce, and considered that, for his country to be prosperous, it must first be strong. His fleet, which consisted of triremes, or vessels with three benches of oars on each side, was divided into two squadrons — one for the Mediterranean, and one for the Red Sea. He then turned his attention to repairing the great navigable canal through the Isthmus of Suez, which, as related in a previous Chapter, had been first opened by Rameses the Great. This work, however, was abandoned, according to Herodotus, because an oracle had warned the Egyptian monarch that he was labouring for the barbarians. But that the channel had been completed at an earlier date is now well known; and it would also appear that it was again thrown open by the enterprise of Necho. The alleged circumnavigation of Africa during his reign may be taken as evidence of the fact.

* The historian is confronted by much obscurity in the events of this period. It is the opinion of some modern inquirers that the fall of Nineveh and entire subversion of the Assyrian Empire took place, not in 625 B.C., as generally supposed, but in or about 606; that in his first campaign Necho was acting against Assyria, and in alliance with the Babylonians; and that it was only in his second campaign that he fought with the latter at Carchemish.

The story of the circumnavigation is told by Herodotus.* He relates that Necho engaged certain Phœnician mariners, and ordered them to sail from the Arabian Gulf (the Red Sea), and to come round through the Pillars of Hercules (now called the Straits of Gibraltar) into the North Sea, or Mediterranean, by which they were to return to Egypt. "Sailing, therefore, down the Gulf," continues the Greek historian, "they passed into the Southern Ocean, and, when autumn arrived, laid up their ships, and sowed the land. Here they remained till harvest-time, when, having reaped their corn, they continued their voyage. In this manner they occupied two years; and the third having brought them by the Pillars of Hercules to Egypt, they related that they had the sun on their right hand as they sailed round Libya." By Libya, Herodotus meant Africa; and to persons sailing westward, south of the tropics, the position of the sun at noon would be what is here indicated, although to the historian the fact appeared incredible. This celebrated voyage is generally described as the circumnavigation of Africa; which, strictly speaking, it would not have been, unless the Phœnicians could have returned to the Red Sea, whence they set out. By these means, says Herodotus, was the form of Africa first ascertained. A second attempt of the same nature was made, at a subsequent epoch, by a Persian named Sataspes, who, alarmed at the length of the voyage, and the desolate appearance of the countries by which he sailed, turned back, and made for Egypt. Several other expeditions, in which the African continent was explored, either along the whole of its coast-line, or for a portion of the distance, are recorded in ancient authors. The most remarkable was that of the Carthaginians under Hanno, who is thought to have accomplished his feat about the year 480 B.C. This commander passed down the whole western

THE TEMPLE AT LUSCOR.

* Book IV., chap. 42.

side of Africa, rounded the southern extremity, and sailed up the eastern side as far as the entrance to the Arabian Gulf. It is certain, therefore, that the ancients were tolerably well acquainted with the coasts of this vast and mysterious territory, besides having some knowledge of the interior; yet, owing to intervening ages of neglect and ignorance, the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope by Bartholomew Diaz, and the passage of that promontory by Vasco de Gama, in the latter part of the fifteenth Christian century, came upon the world like a revelation.

RUINS AT SAIS.

The pacific enterprises of Necho must have taken place subsequently to his Syrian wars; and it is probable that they occupied the whole remainder of his reign after the defeat at Carchemish. In all, he occupied the throne sixteen years, and, dying in 594 B.C., was succeeded by his son Psammetichus II., the Psammis of Herodotus, who added to the temples of Thebes and of Lower Egypt. The reign of this monarch was brief, and not very eventful. He made no attempt to pass beyond the boundaries of Africa, and was therefore unmolested by Nebuchadnezzar, the powerful sovereign of Babylon. Egypt was apparently prosperous, and, though no longer the great dominion it had formerly been, was still regarded by some foreign nations, especially the Greeks, as a depository of ancient wisdom. The only military expedition of the second Psammetichus was one which he led into Ethiopia, when he erected or enlarged the small temple on the east bank of the Nile opposite Philæ. Of the results of the invasion we hear nothing. The Eleans sent an embassy into Egypt during this reign, the object of which was to solicit an opinion as to the propriety of their rules for the Olympic games; and Herodotus has preserved some details of the discussion. The Egyptian king was evidently respected at home and abroad; but he had very little time in which to distinguish himself, and died in 588 B.C., after a reign of only six years. He would seem to have contemplated a war with Babylon, but did not survive to carry it out. The enterprise was left for his son, Apries, or Vaphres, who is mentioned in the Bible as Pharaoh-Hophra, and described on the Egyptian monuments as Uahabra.

It was to aid the Jews in casting off the yoke of

Nebuchadnezzar that Pharaoh-Hophra equipped his army for the field. The supremacy of Babylon was a danger for Egypt, which might be passed over for a time, but could not be permanently disregarded. To the ruler of that country it appeared desirable to encourage Zedekiah, King of Judah, in resistance to his suzerain; but before the Egyptians could go to his support, Nebuchadnezzar had invested all the fortified cities. In 587 B.C., the forces of Pharaoh-Hophra proceeded to the relief of Jerusalem, which opposed a stubborn front to the enemy. To meet the danger by which he was threatened, Nebuchadnezzar raised the siege, marched against the Egyptians, and compelled them to retire: the capture of Jerusalem followed shortly afterwards. The sovereign of Egypt appears to have done the most he could for the Jewish monarch and people; and, on the fall of Jerusalem, Jeremiah and a number of his countrymen found shelter and protection in the land of the Nile. Yet both Jeremiah and Ezekiel denounced Egypt in passionate terms, and threatened her with the exterminating vengeance of Jehovah, acting through the instrumentality of Nebuchadnezzar. At the Egyptian town of Daphnæ (Tahpanhes), Jeremiah prophecied that Hophra would be destroyed by the power of the Babylonian. According to this forecast, numbers of the Egyptians were to be slain by the sword in their own land, while others were to be sent into captivity. Moreover, a fire was to be kindled in the temples, and Nebuchadnezzar was to burn the idols, and also to carry them away captive, and also to break them; finally, he was to burn the temples themselves, and, having clad himself with the land of Egypt, as a shepherd clothes himself with his garment, was to depart in peace.* Of the fulfilment of these prophecies there is no historical evidence of any value. Josephus, indeed, affirms that Nebuchadnezzar invaded Egypt in the fifth year after the capture of Jerusalem, and the twenty-third of his own reign; that he slew the king of that land, set up another in his place, and transported to Babylon the Jews who had sought refuge in Egypt.† But the assertion is not supported by any other record, and harmonises ill with the general course of events. Nor is there any distinct and unequivocal statement in the Bible itself that the prophecies were accomplished. A very confused passage in Jeremiah (xlvi. 13—26), which is the nearest approach to such a statement, has much more the character of a thing foreshadowed than of a relation of what had actually occurred.

Pharaoh-Hophra, or Apries, seems to have conducted a campaign in Palestine and Phœnicia, when he took Sidon and Gaza, and gained several naval victories over the Tyrians and Cyprians. But what relation these events bore to the operations in support of Jerusalem is far from clear. It is probable that the object of the Egyptian monarch was to obtain a number of positions in what went under the general name of Syria, and also in the island of Cyprus, as a counterpoise to the menacing power of Babylon. The history, however, is exceedingly obscure, and what degree of ultimate success was obtained must be left wholly to conjecture. As far as Tyre is concerned, it is known that that city was blockaded by Nebuchadnezzar from 586 to 573 B.C. In the latter of those years it submitted to the Chaldæan conqueror, with whom the citizens made favourable terms; and Ezekiel then repeated, with still greater fervour, the prophecies of misfortune regarding Egypt which had already been uttered by Jeremiah. Not only Egypt and Ethiopia, but Libya and Lydia, were to be terribly afflicted.‡ The Egyptian people were to be exterminated by Nebuchadnezzar, and also to be scattered among the nations; the cities were to be destroyed; the land was to be made waste and desolate; the rivers were to be dried; the idols were to cease, and the women to go into captivity.§ As a matter of fact, Nebuchadnezzar appears to have remained in Syria even after the fall of Tyre; and of consuming judgments in Egypt and the neighbouring lands, we have no certain record.

But, although these events do not seem to have happened, the life of Apries (as it is convenient to call him, except in connection with Scriptural events) came to a disastrous close. Some Greek colonies had been planted about sixty years before on the northern shores of Africa, in the peninsula running out into the Mediterranean between the Libyan Desert and the Great Syrtis. Apries made no claim to a right of suzerainty over these colonies; but a cause of quarrel presently arose, which induced him to send an army against the Greeks. To maintain the settlement of Cyrene, a large quantity of land had been taken from the Libyans; and Adikran, the ruler of the tribes thus wronged, appealed to the Egyptian monarch for

* Jeremiah, xliii. 10, 11, 12, 13, where the name appears Nebuchadrezzar.

† Antiquities of the Jews, Book X., chap. 9, par. 7.

‡ It is uncertain what country was meant by "Lydia;" but the well-known State in Asia Minor, so called, is obviously out of the question.

§ Ezekiel, xxx.

assistance, offering, in return for the favour, to acknowledge the supremacy of Egypt. This was granted, and Apries despatched an army against Cyrene. But the Greek colonists were a martial community, and inflicted a severe defeat on the Egyptians at the fountain of Thestes, in 571 B.C. The subjects of Apries were highly exasperated at this reverse, and, as the Ionian mercenaries on the eastern borders towards Syria had not been included in the expedition—doubtless because they were very unlikely to fight against men of their own race—the military caste loudly affirmed that the king had purposely sent his native troops into a position where they were sure to be destroyed. The soldiers who returned, and the friends of the slain, accordingly broke into open revolt; and the king commanded Amasis of Siuph, in the canton of Saïs—one of his best generals—to bring back the troops to their allegiance. This man was of humble origin; a lover of wine, of merriment, and of licentious indulgences. Nevertheless, his abilities were not inconsiderable, and his ambition aimed at greater distinction than would be likely to follow in the ordinary paths of service. Whether he went to the camp of the mutineers with a design of playing the traitor, or only yielded to a sudden impulse, may be uncertain; but he quickly sided with the malcontents. While addressing the troops, and either really or ostensibly exhorting them to obey the commands of their sovereign, as one who had their interest at heart, an Egyptian who stood behind suddenly placed a helmet on his head, proclaimed him king, and announced, in the name of his comrades, that all were willing to obey him as their master, and to make him the ruler of Egypt.

Amasis did not require much persuasion to accept the offer. He put himself at the head of the troops, and prepared to assert his power. Intelligence of this new danger having reached Apries, he despatched one of his courtiers, named Patarbêmis, to the camp with directions to bring back Amasis to his presence. Patarbêmis found the rebel sitting on horseback amidst his armed followers, and received an insulting answer to his summons. He immediately returned to the king, who, in his anger and disappointment, caused the nose and ears of Patarbêmis to be cut off. The act exasperated the whole body of the Egyptian people into revolt, and Apries found himself deserted by all but his Ionian and Carian auxiliaries, at the head of whom, to the number of 30,000, he set forth to encounter the enemy. The two armies met, according to Herodotus, at Momemphis, in the Delta; according to Diodorus Siculus, at Marea, on the south-western shore of Lake Mareotis. After contending against superior numbers with great bravery, the Greeks were utterly defeated, and Apries fell into the hands of his antagonist, who confined him as a prisoner in the palace at Saïs which he had recently inhabited as a king. The people clamoured for his death; but Amasis, who now occupied the throne, showed an extreme disinclination to carry out the general desire, and treated his captive with much kindness. At length he was compelled to give way; and Apries, having been surrendered to the mob, was strangled in 570 or 569 B.C. That this was not a mere outbreak of vindictiveness, but was regarded as an act of severe justice, is shown by the fact that the body of the monarch was subjected to no indignities, but was buried in the tomb of his ancestors, in the sacred enclosure of the temple of Neith, or Minerva, at Saïs.*

It is recorded by Herodotus that, in the time of his prosperity, Apries had expressed his belief that not even the gods could cast him down from his eminence. This quality of pride is noticed in Ezekiel (xxix. 3), where Jehovah is represented as saying:—"Behold, I am against thee, Pharaoh King of Egypt, the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers, which hath said, My river is mine own, and I have made it for myself." If Apries really said what Herodotus reports, such a boast was certain to inflame popular opinion against him amongst so religious a community as the Egyptians, and his subsequent misfortunes would be regarded as a proof of divine vengeance. But these misfortunes, though signal, are very far from fulfilling the denunciations of woe, with respect to Egypt and her king, contained in the writings of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. In the twenty-ninth chapter of the latter book (verses 9 to 15), it is stated that the land of Egypt should be utterly waste and desolate. No foot of man should pass through it, nor foot of beast; nor should it be inhabited for forty years. The Egyptian people were to be scattered among the nations, and not to be restored to their own country until the forty years had expired; after which, Egypt was to be the basest of the kingdoms. These forecasts have occupied the attention of many commentators; but it has been found impossible to reconcile them with historical events. The promised judgments were to take place during the reign at Babylon of Nebuchadnezzar, which lasted from 604 to 561 B.C.—a period covered, so far as Egypt is concerned, by the reigns of Necho,

* The authorities for this narrative are Herodotus (Book II.) and Diodorus Siculus (Book I.).

Psammetichus II., Apries, and Amasis. This period of forty-three years, though marked by some reverses such as happen occasionally to all nations, was on the whole a period of great prosperity to Egypt. The popular tradition in the country itself when Herodotus was there, about a hundred years later, was that Egypt had never had so prosperous a time as during the reign of Amasis; and this statement is fully borne out by the testimony of the monuments. The kingdom had indeed lost its foreign possessions; but the people were wealthy and respected, and art was in a high state of development. The river, according to Herodotus, had never been so liberal to the land, nor had the land ever brought forth so abundantly for the service of man. Egypt in the reigns of Apries and Amasis had little reason to envy the greater predominance of Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar.*

It is possible that Amasis, on succeeding to the throne, may have had to pay tribute to the Babylonian monarch, who had extended his power to the borders of Egypt, though even of this there is no proof; but his military position within his own realm was sufficiently good to make attack unlikely. Amasis was a politic, if not a very conscientious, prince. He continued on the paths laid down by his predecessor, as not seldom happens when there has been a change of government. The Greeks were as much encouraged as during the reign of Apries. Peace was at once concluded with the Cyrenæans, to whose king, Battus III., a gilded image of the goddess of Saïs, together with a portrait of the new Egyptian sovereign, was sent as an offer of friendly alliance. Among his wives, Amasis included two Greek women, one of whom is thought to have been a princess of the royal house of Cyrene. The Ionians and Carians were removed from the eastern frontiers, settled at Memphis, and made the body-guard of the king. Greek merchants were permitted to live at Naucratis, on the Canopic mouth of the Nile, under their own overseers and their own laws; and for the convenience of those who paid occasional visits for purposes of trade, Amasis granted certain lands whereon they might set up altars and erect temples, the number of which, built by some of the principal Greek States, soon became very considerable. The Egyptian ruler even honoured the gods of Hellas by making offerings at their shrines; and when the temple of Delphi was accidentally burned, in the twenty-first year of the reign of Amasis (about 548 B.C.), he sent a handsome gift in aid of its reconstruction. The liberal patronage extended to the Greeks caused increased numbers of that nationality to flock into Egypt, and the foreign trade was almost entirely in their hands. The privileges granted to Naucratis afford a curious example in early times of the system of monopolies, or of protected industry, which has played so important a part in the modern world. No ship was permitted to land at any other place in Egypt, but was obliged to sail directly to the city, and deposit its cargo there. Whoever appeared at any other than the Canopic mouth of the Nile was compelled to swear that he had not come there of his own free will, and was then bound to sail for Naucratis, or, if that were impossible, owing to contrary winds, was under the necessity of moving his goods on board the common barges of the river, and carrying them round the Delta until he reached the favoured port.

At the same time that he gave all this encouragement to the Greeks, Amasis took care to conciliate his own countrymen also. He had two Egyptian wives, as well as two of Hellenic race, and one of the former was a daughter of Psammetichus II. It is probable that Amasis hoped, by contracting an alliance with the family he had deposed, to escape the reproach of being an usurper; and to his son by this particular wife he gave the name of the maternal grandfather. Considering the whole tenour of his life, and the readiness with which he paid court to the religious ideas of his foreign subjects, we are justified in assuming that Amasis was a man of philosophical breadth, if not of sceptical indifference, in matters of faith. Yet he was observant of those religious forms which were dear to the hearts of Egyptians, and paid marked attention to the Apis-worship. He was also, like so many of his predecessors, a great builder, and Saïs, as the seat of the dynasty, was adorned by him with magnificent works. Among these edifices, one of the most conspicuous was a superb propylæum, or court of entrance, before the temple of Neith (Minerva), in front of which were several colossi, with an avenue of sphinxes leading up to the main porch. The stones of which this splendid building was constructed are described by Herodotus as of rare size and excellence: the largest were brought from Elephantine, a distance of twenty days from Saïs. They were doubtless granite blocks, and must have been most difficult to transport. Of these extraordinary

* According to Diodorus (I. 31), Egypt in the ancient time had 18,000 communities, and under the Ptolemies 30,600. According to Theocritus (Idyll. XVII. 83), Egypt possessed 33,600 communities. (Duncker's History of Antiquity, Book VI., chap. 16.)

masses, the one which Herodotus most admired was something which he refers to as "a chamber made of a single stone," quarried at Elephantine, near the First Cataract. It took three years to convey this block from the quarry to Saïs, and two thousand labourers, selected from the class of boatmen, were employed in the task. Large as the monolith was, however, it had been surpassed by the granite colossus of Rameses II. at Thebes, and the monolithic temple at Buto. A singular and impressive story is told by Herodotus in connection with the huge granite block brought from Elephantine. It lay, he said, near the entrance to the temple, where it had been left in consequence of an incident which, trifling as it was, filled the heart of Amasis with foreboding. When the stone was very near its place of destination, the architect heaved a deep sigh, as if considering the length of time the removal had taken, and feeling wearied with the heavy toil. Amasis heard the sigh, and, regarding it as an evil omen, would not allow the chamber to be moved any further. Another tradition, however, alleged that the reason of the work being arrested was that one of the workmen employed at the levers was crushed by the enormous mass. Superstition undoubtedly had its share in stopping the further progress of the stone; but, after all abatements have been made, the story seems to show a greater regard for human life than had been usual in earlier ages.

Many other monuments of the time of Amasis are to be found in various parts of Egypt, and the sculptures of the reign were numerous and remarkable. Something of the grandeur of ancient Egyptian art had by this time disappeared; but the forms were more graceful, more highly wrought, and less conventional in their treatment. The name of Amasis occurs in inscriptions found in all the quarries of Egypt: in those of red granite, towards Ethiopia; in those of ordinary granite, at Hamamat; in those of limestone, at Memphis; and in those of sandstone, at Selsilis. In the Egyptian tongue, the name of this monarch was Aahmes; but, owing mainly to the genius of Herodotus, he will always be known to history as Amasis. Notwithstanding the questionable means by which he obtained possession of the throne, his rule was just and mild, and he is said to have regulated the duties and economical relations of the nomarchs, or governors of provinces, and to have set limits to their power. The Greeks considered him a sovereign of extraordinary wisdom, and he was popular with his native subjects also. Commerce was encouraged, and wealth poured into the country from all surrounding lands. So strong was the feeling of Amasis against idleness that he made a law requiring every man to present himself once a year before the governor of his nome, and show some means of livelihood, at the risk of suffering death if he failed to prove his industry; but it seems probable that this was the revival of an old law. Amasis himself, though a lover of enjoyment, certainly discharged the duties of his own office with scrupulous attention to business. From dawn to an advanced hour of the day, he transacted whatever affairs were brought before him; the remainder of his time was passed in feasting and drinking with his friends. On these occasions, the ancient ceremonial of the Egyptian court was so entirely disregarded that the more punctilious would sometimes venture to remonstrate with the king on his want of dignity; to which he would reply with a simile which has become one of the commonplaces of modern conversation. He would say that bows, if they were always kept strung, would break, but that wise bowmen unbraced them when the shooting was over. If men gave themselves constantly to serious work, and never indulged their minds with sport and pastime, they became mad or moody. Therefore Amasis divided his time between business and pleasure, and rejected the advice of those who would have had him sit always on a gorgeous throne, engaged in deliberating on affairs of state.

The strange combination of good and ill which marked the character of this extraordinary man, is seen in the contrast between his earlier and his later life. He had been a reveller in his youth, while occupying a private position; and, when means failed, he would roam abroad, robbing people. If charged with the offence, he was in the habit of denying it, and in that case was brought before the nearest oracle. The oracles, it seems, were not unvarying in their replies. Sometimes they would pronounce him guilty; at others, they would acquit him. After coming to the throne, he refused to reverence the gods who had declared he was not a thief, remarking that they were false and worthless; but the gods who had justly convicted him he honoured exceedingly, as true gods, whose oracles did not deceive. This circumstance, related by Herodotus, proves the strong instinct of justice existing in the man, despite his sensual and turbulent nature, and also the curious feeling of independence in matters of religious faith, which in him, as in many other rulers, was combined with a certain regard for external forms. The basis of his character was apparently a strong principle of self-reliance,

guided by considerations of policy, and not at all troubled by scruples of conscience as to the means by which results were to be obtained. He was the stuff of which successful usurpers are made, and his career shows how prone is fortune to attend on intellectual power, force of character, and the ability to judge of men. Amasis is the first Egyptian monarch whom we seem to know as a human being, not simply as a splendid or a mournful name; and this is chiefly owing to the vivid portraiture of Herodotus.

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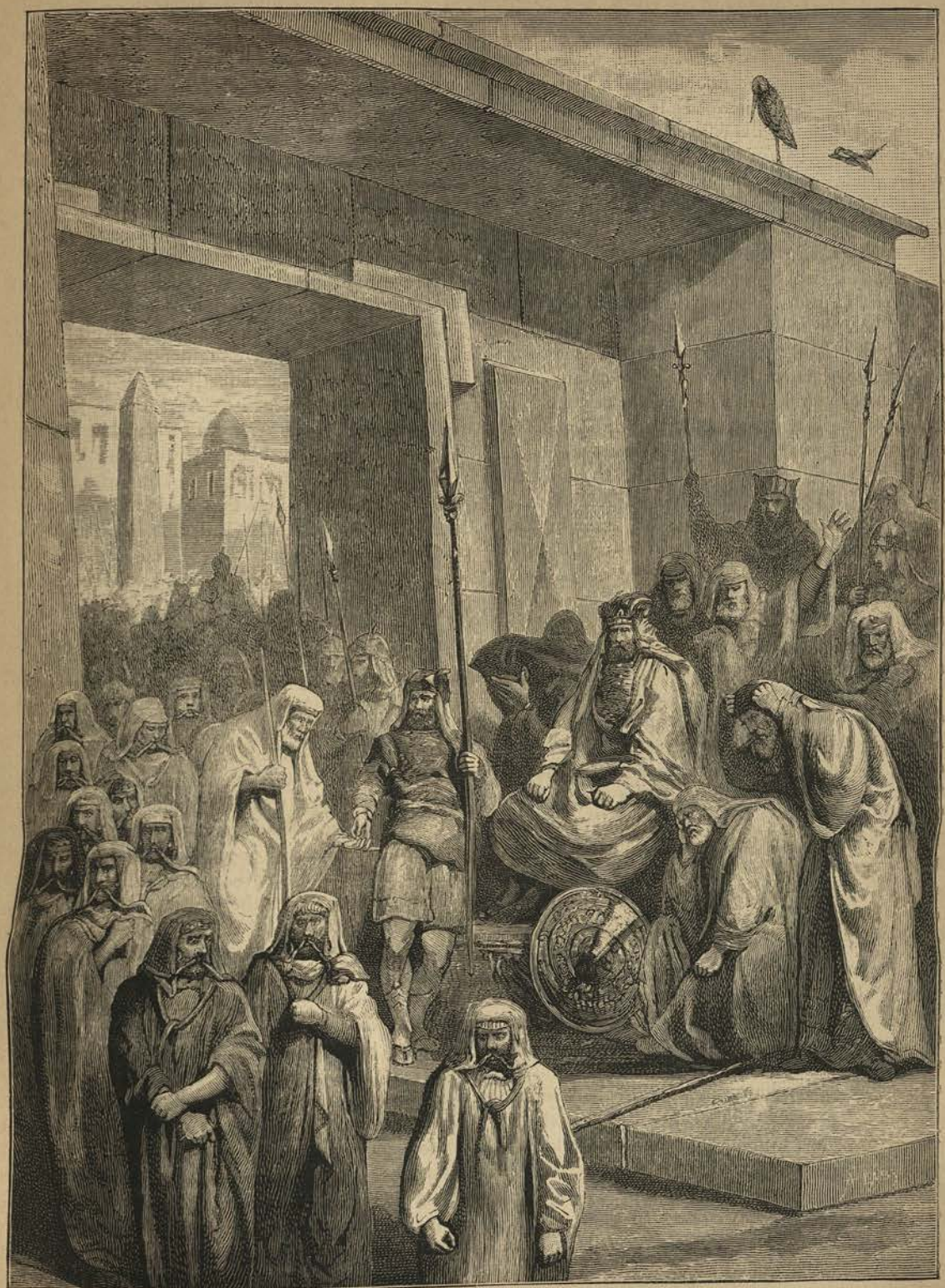
In the course of his long reign, Amasis formed an alliance with Polycrates, the tyrant of Samos, and by the power of his fleet obtained possession of Cyprus, which had occasionally before that time been tributary to Egypt. This created another link between the Egyptian and Hellenic nationalities; for the population of the island had in earlier ages received a considerable Greek element. It was under the sceptre of Amasis that three very illustrious Greeks visited the country of the Nile. These were Solon, Thales, and Pythagoras. Solon, it is said, went there to examine the Egyptian code of laws, which perhaps furnished him with some material for his own; Thales and Pythagoras to study philosophy, of which the learned men of Egypt were supposed to hold the keys. The speculations of Pythagoras are believed to have been largely derived from the theocratic science of the Egyptians; so that, both in matters of pure intellect and of art, the minds of the two races are seen, at this remarkable epoch, undergoing a process of transfusion which led to great results.

Only one serious mistake can be charged upon Amasis during the whole of his reign. He provoked the wrath of a very powerful antagonist when he entered into a treaty with Crœsus, King of Lydia, and with Nabonidus, the last King of Babylon, against Cyrus the Persian. This was about the year 555 B.C., and the object of the league was to curb a power then threatening to overshadow all the east. In the "Cyropædia" of Xenophon, it is stated that Amasis sent to the aid



CAMBYSES AND PSAMMETICHUS.

of Crœsus a body of 120,000 soldiers, formed into phalanxes of 10,000 men each, every one of whom was covered from head to foot with a huge shield, and armed with a falchion and a long spear. The phalanx here described is represented in pictorial designs of the Sixth Dynasty, and was doubtless the origin of similar military formations in the armies of Greece and Rome. During the war that ensued, the Egyptians are said to have fought so well as to have resisted all the assaults of the Persians in the open field; yet they were at length obliged to capitulate, and were settled by Cyrus in the cities of Larissa and Cyllene, where their descendants remained in the time of Xenophon. The "Cyropædia" is too manifestly romantic in some of its details to be of any great value as a work of history; and the relation here given is not in harmony with that of Herodotus, from which it would seem that Crœsus was taken prisoner before the Egyptians could go to his assistance.* Yet the narrative of Xenophon is probably not altogether fanciful, and in this particular instance bears an aspect of truthfulness. It is unlikely that he would invent so precise a circumstance as the existence of Egyptian colonists at Larissa and Cyllene in his own day; and the contingent sent to Crœsus seems the most likely way of accounting for their presence.

Even, however, supposing the troops were not actually sent, the intention to send them was unquestionably formed, for the fact of Amasis having entered into a league with Crœsus is not disputed. The design excited in the mind of the Persian monarch a feeling of enmity towards Egypt, which it is not difficult to understand. But Cyrus himself did nothing to avenge what he must have regarded as at least an attempt to injure him. It is probable he formed such a design, but, if so, he left it to his son Cambyses to carry out. The loss of 120,000 of the best Egyptian troops (supposing the statement of Xenophon to be correct) would in itself be an encouragement to strike a heavy blow, and would greatly favour the chances of an invasion. Nine-and-twenty years, however, elapsed between the defeat of Crœsus in 554, and the invasion of Egypt by Persia, in 525, B.C.; and it would seem likely that in the meanwhile the Egyptians had in some degree recovered their military strength. Still, they may not have done so to the fullest extent, and in any case the power of Persia was now much greater than that of her rival. Amasis had at one time been on friendly terms with Cyrus, and had sent him a celebrated oculist for a disorder of the eyes. The story arising out of this circumstance is romantic and apocryphal, but not altogether unworthy of repetition. The physician, it is said, resented being compelled to leave his wife and family, and reside in Persia. He therefore meditated how he might retaliate on Amasis, and, several years after, instigated Cambyses to require in marriage the daughter of the Egyptian king, hoping that the latter would in this way suffer affliction from the loss of his child, or by a refusal provoke the mighty sovereign of Persia into acting as a declared enemy. Amasis disliked the character of Cambyses, and therefore shrank from putting his daughter in the power of such a man. As a substitute, he sent the daughter of the former king, Apries, allowing it to be supposed that she was his own child; but the deception did not last long. Nitetis, the daughter of Apries, soon informed the king of her real parentage, and told him that her father had been deposed by Amasis, who had suffered him to be put to death. Upon this, Cambyses resolved to lead an army into Egypt, and to chastise the murderer of Apries. Another tradition affirms that it was Cyrus, not Cambyses, who sent to the Egyptian king for his daughter, and that Cambyses was in truth the grandson of Amasis, with a kind of hereditary claim to the throne. A third legend made Cambyses the son of a Persian woman who had been neglected in favour of an Egyptian mistress; and in this case the motive for the invasion of Egypt was the desire of the young prince to avenge his mother's wrongs.†

These stories are all questionable, and the first is discredited by the fact that, at the time Amasis is alleged to have sent the daughter of Apries to Cambyses, any child of the deposed monarch would have been too old to attract the regard of an Eastern sovereign. The probability is that Cyrus had long intended to punish Egypt for her alliance with Crœsus and Nabonidus, but that affairs of pressing importance postponed the fulfilment of his purpose, which was afterwards taken up by Cambyses. It is of course very possible that a variety of motives may have conduced to this expedition; but there is none more likely than the desire of an ambitious monarch to be quit of a rival. Cambyses accordingly got together a large army, and, while deliberating on what route he should pursue, and how he should manage to pass the sandy desert of Syria, was visited by a certain Halicarnassian, named Phanes, who had

* Herodotus, I. 77, 78.

† Herodotus, III. 1—3.

served among the Greek auxiliaries of Amasis, but, owing to some cause of quarrel, had forsaken his former master, and escaped into Persia. Phanes proved exceedingly useful to Cambyses. He gave him a good deal of information about the affairs of his adversary, and explained the best method of traversing the desert. The only open passage into Egypt, he said, was by way of Arabia, and he recommended that a treaty should be made with the king of that country, who might be induced to grant a safe passage through his territories. The treaty was accordingly concluded; the Arabian monarch agreed to supply the Persian with guides and abundance of water; and the expedition set out.

On reaching the pass through the desert, Cambyses found that his ally had ordered all his camels to be laden with skins filled with water, and had sent them into the arid region to await the arrival of the Persian army. A less credible account says that the Arabian prince caused a pipe of ox-hides and other skins to be sewed together, by which he conveyed water from the river Corys to the desert, where he dug large reservoirs to receive and preserve the fluid. In any case, however, the army of Cambyses was aided on its march by the arrangements of the Arabian king, and the confines of Egypt were safely reached. But by this time Amasis was no longer the sovereign of that country. He died in 526 B.C., after a reign of some forty-four years; and when the Persians arrived in the vicinity of the Delta, in 525, the throne was occupied by the son of Amasis, Psammetichus III., sometimes called Psammenitus, or Psamatik. This unfortunate monarch had made great preparations for the defence of his realm, and was now encamped before Pelusium in a plain near the mouth of the Nile. The Persians, having successfully crossed the desert, made immediate dispositions for an attack. The Egyptians were no less resolute, and the Ionian and Carian auxiliaries were particularly incensed against the traitor Phanes for having brought a foreign army into the land. This man had left two sons in Egypt. Before battle was joined, the Greeks seized upon the youths, slew them over a large bowl in the sight of their father, and mingled the blood with wine and water. Each of the soldiers tasted of this dreadful compound before commencing the fight, and the conflict was obstinate and fierce. Vast numbers were slain on both sides; but the Persians in the end proved the stronger, and the Egyptians fled in disorder to Memphis, where they shut themselves up within the walls.

The fortifications of Egyptian cities were not usually such as to detain an enterprising commander for any great length of time. In fact, the cities in their totality were, with a few exceptions, not fortified at all after the accession of the Eighteenth Dynasty; but in each there was a central fortress, into which the people retired in case of danger. A species of minor forts existed in the propylæa, or outer buildings of the temples, and in these the royal treasures and sacred objects were stored away when attack was apprehended. Strongholds on the frontier, and towns which happened to be in a commanding position, were more systematically protected; but neither Thebes nor Memphis had any wall of circuit, the hundred gates of the former being simply those of the propylæa.* Cambyses, therefore, resolved to advance at once upon Memphis, and to attack Psammetichus in that famous and ancient city, if he could not effect an arrangement of a more satisfactory character. While on his march, he sent a Persian herald up the Nile in a Mitylenian vessel, to treat with the Egyptians. The latter, however, on seeing the envoys approach, sallied out from the fortress, destroyed the ship, and tore the crew limb from limb. This act of ferocity filled Cambyses with indignation. He brought his whole force to bear on Memphis, which, after withstanding a siege, surrendered to the invader. A terrible slaughter of the inhabitants ensued, and Diodorus Siculus relates that numerous artificers and immense riches were carried off to Persia, where the splendid buildings of Persepolis and Susa were erected out of the spoil. Many statues of the gods were removed at the same time, but some of these were brought back in the reign of Ptolemy III. (Euergetes), about 238 B.C. Psammetichus III. was taken prisoner, and two thousand young Egyptians of good birth, together with the king's son, were condemned to death, in retaliation for the murder of the two hundred persons on board the Mitylenian vessel. Struck with terror, the Libyans at once submitted to Cambyses, and the Greek colonies of Barca and Cyrene sent him presents, in the hope of winning his favour.

Herodotus gives a remarkable narrative, full of picturesque and affecting detail, of the manner in which the Persian monarch triumphed over his fallen adversary. He seated him, together with some Egyptians of high rank, in a gate of the city of Memphis, and ordered a number of prisoners to move in procession before him. Having dressed

* Sir Gardner Wilkinson's Notes to Herodotus, Books II. and III.

the daughter of the unfortunate king in the habit of a slave, he sent her with a pitcher to fetch water, and in this humble office she was assisted by the daughters of several noblemen, whose fathers were present to witness their degradation. When the princess and her companions had passed by, the son of Psammetichus, with two thousand Egyptians of the same age, all with halters round their necks, and bridles in their mouths, appeared upon the scene: these were the victims who were to suffer retribution for the massacre of the Mitylenians. The Egyptian noblemen wept and uttered loud lamentations over the fate of their sons and daughters; but Psammetichus preserved a strange composure. At length, however, he noticed an old man who had been one of his festive associates, but who, having lost his all, was compelled to solicit alms of the soldiery. Hereupon Psammetichus broke into tears, called out to his companion by name, and smote his head. Cambyses required to know the reason of so strange a difference, and the Egyptian monarch replied that the misfortunes of his family were too great to be expressed by tears, but that he could not forbear from weeping over the sufferings of a friend who, at the threshold of age, had come to want. On hearing this explanation, Cambyses and his Persians were deeply moved, and orders were immediately given to save the life of the Egyptian king's son; but the sentence in his case had been already carried out.* The king himself was not only spared, but treated with honour, according to the custom of the Persians in dealing with vanquished princes. Almost immediately afterwards, however, he plotted against Cambyses, and was either killed, or sent prisoner to Susa. His reign, which terminated in 525 B.C., had lasted only about six months, and with him ended the dynasty to which he belonged, and even the Egyptian monarchy, which had endured as a united kingdom for a thousand years. Egypt was now nothing more than a province of Persia.

The *Twenty-seventh Dynasty* consisted of eight Persian kings — Cambyses, Darius Hystaspis, Xerxes the Great, Artabanus, Artaxerxes, Xerxes II., Sogdianus, and Darius Nothus. Furious and ungovernable as were the moods of passion to which Cambyses was frequently liable, he seems to have treated the Egyptians, in the earlier part of his reign, with much consideration. He confirmed in their offices those whom he found invested with certain functions. The great sacrifices he ordered to be renewed, and the festivals to be celebrated as formerly. He himself presented offerings to the Egyptian goddess Neith, performed the usual libations and ceremonies, and, on the complaint of the sacred scribe and high officer, Utaharsun, directed that intruders who had established themselves in the principal temple should be driven out, so that the fane might be re-established in all its ancient rights. These interesting facts are recorded by Utaharsun in the hieroglyphic inscriptions on a statue of black basalt now in the Vatican; and it also appears that Cambyses visited the holy places, including probably the tomb of Osiris, and was initiated like a Pharaoh, receiving, together with that title, the Egyptian prenomen, Remesot, *i.e.*, "born of the sun." Subsequently, however, the conduct of the Persian monarch became very different. The disastrous failure of two expeditions—one against the Ethiopians, led by Cambyses in person, the other against the Ammonians—seems to have driven him mad, and he returned to Egypt in a state of fiery rage and excitement. The shattering of many of the Egyptian monuments (including the vocal statue of Memnon) is attributed to him; and he is also accused of having inflicted a wound on the sacred bull, Apis, which he designed to kill, in order that he might prove to the Egyptians the folly of their worship. An inscription in the Serapeum of Memphis, discovered by M. Mariette in 1851, shows that the animal thus stabbed by Cambyses survived until the reign of his successor, Darius Hystaspis. The priests were scourged, and various other acts of tyranny committed; so that when Cambyses died, about the close of 522 B.C., he left behind him a name long detested in Egypt as that of an impious despot and a cruel persecutor.

The rule of Darius was conciliatory, both towards the priests and people, and salutary reforms were introduced into the laws. The name of this monarch is found on many of the Apis *stelæ*, and the larger part of the temple in the Great Oasis was erected by the son of Hystaspis. Nevertheless, the Egyptians sighed for their ancient independence, and in 486 B.C. rose in so wide and general an insurrection that the Persians were expelled from the whole valley of the Nile. This state of freedom endured for upwards of a year, during which time Darius died; but in the second year of the ensuing reign (484 B.C.) Xerxes reconquered Egypt. Another revolt took place under the sceptre of Artaxerxes I., about 463 B.C. A petty king or chieftain, named Inarus, who ruled over certain wild African tribes to the west of the Nile valley, but who appears to have been descended from the ancient monarchs of Egypt, suddenly raised the flag of rebellion, and, in con-

* Herodotus, III. 14, 15.

junction with a person called Amyrtæus, attacked the Persian troops under the command of the satrap Achæmenes. The latter were defeated near Papremis, in the Delta, and Achæmenes was slain by Inarus. The revolt then spread so widely that the Persian forces sought protection within the walls of Memphis, where they were closely blockaded. At the request of Inarus, an Athenian fleet of two hundred sail gave its assistance to the movement, destroyed a Persian squadron on the Nile, and helped to wrest Memphis from the hands of the enemy, with the exception of the citadel, which still held out. Matters looked threatening for the continued existence of Persia as a great empire, and Artaxerxes endeavoured to neutralise the action of the Athenians by bribing the Spartans to invade their territory. The plan failed, and it became necessary to crush the rising by a direct exercise of force. An army, which Diodorus Siculus reckons at 300,000 men, and Ctesias at 500,000, was placed under the command of Megabyzus, one of the best of the Persian generals, and directed against Memphis. The Egyptians and their allies were speedily overcome; the citadel of Memphis was relieved, and the city itself was re-occupied by the Persians. A series of disasters now attended the Athenians, who must have lamented their precipitation in joining the Egyptian revolt. Flying to a part of the Delta which is enclosed between two branches of the Nile, they sustained a siege for eighteen months; at the end of which time, Megabyzus turned the water from one of the streams, and caused the stranding of the Athenian ships. He then marched across the river-bed, and, attacking the Greeks with superior numbers, worsted them with immense slaughter, and compelled the survivors to seek refuge in Cyrene. The whole of the fleet was captured, and a reinforcement of fifty ships, which arrived soon after, was so vigorously and unexpectedly assailed that more than half were lost. Inarus was betrayed by his own followers, or, according to some accounts, at length surrendered himself, on receiving a promise from the Persian general, Megabyzus, that he should be pardoned; but he was afterwards crucified by order of the king. Amyrtæus escaped into the fens, where for a time he maintained a species of independence; and Egypt was not again able to lift her head for several years. It was during the reign of Artaxerxes that Egypt was visited (about 460 B.C.) by Herodotus, to whom we are indebted for the most minute and lively account of the land, the religion, and the people, that we possess — an account which, notwithstanding occasional inaccuracies and imperfections, is invaluable. The revolt was by that time quelled; but Egypt was still seething with discontent.

Under Darius Nothus, the people once more rose in insurrection. In 414 B.C., Amyrtæus acquired a position as independent King of Egypt, and is regarded in history as forming the *Twenty-eighth Dynasty*. He ruled at Saïs for six years, and was succeeded by Nepherites, the first king of the *Twenty-ninth Dynasty*. Another Psammetichus is also mentioned, and may perhaps have reigned separately in a different part of Egypt. The kings of this and of the *Thirtieth Dynasty* (which began in 387 B.C.) gave Egypt several years of peace and prosperity, and, with the aid of Greek alliances, the attempts of the Persians to re-establish their power were defeated. Nectanebo I., the founder of the Thirtieth (or Sebennytic) Dynasty, repaired and enlarged many of the grand monuments of his country, which had suffered greatly since the first Persian invasion; others were originated by him; and a fine obelisk was cut by his orders, and transported from the quarries of Syene. He successfully resisted a formidable attack by the Persians, although his Athenian auxiliaries went over to the enemy (373 B.C.); and the next monarch, Tachos, or Teos (who came to the throne in 369 B.C.), even ventured, with the aid of the Lacedæmonians and Athenians, to assail the Persians in their own dominion. The expedition promised well, and Tachos penetrated into Syria, but was ultimately compelled to fly, owing to the intrigues of his nephew, Nectanebo, and the defection of Agesilaus, the Spartan general, followed by the withdrawal of the Athenian fleet under Chabrias.

The throne of Egypt was now occupied by Nectanebo II., who began his reign in 361 B.C. After a period of civil war, the power of this monarch became so firmly established, by the help of Agesilaus, that he was enabled to defy the Persians, and to assist the revolt of Phœnicia with a force of 4,000 Greeks, serving as his auxiliaries, under the command of Mentor the Rhodian. But these Greeks afterwards proved as treacherous as many of their countrymen had done before, and Nectanebo, yielding to the vigorous attacks of Artaxerxes Ochus, fled into Ethiopia, by way of the river, about 353 B.C. Thus Egypt was again included in the Persian Empire, and the *Thirty-first Dynasty* consisted of the three Persian kings, Artaxerxes Ochus, Arses, and Darius Codomannus. The first of these sovereigns tyrannised over the people, and insulted their religion; indeed, the Persians were so cordially detested by the

Egyptians that the latter welcomed the armies of Alexander the Great, when they arrived in 332 B.C., as deliverers from a hated rule. But the history of Egypt here enters on a wholly different stage, which must be relegated to a distinct place in the general order of events.

CHAPTER XI.

THE ISRAELITES UNDER MOSES.

Character of Moses—Position of the Israelites in the Sinaitic Peninsula—The Delivery of the Law on Mount Sinai—Summary of the Mosaic Code—The Levites, and the Origin of their Priestly Power—Provisions for the Establishment of a Monarchy—Relations with Foreign Countries—Laws affecting the Land—Social Regulations; Religious Observances; Punishments—Military Order of the Jewish Camp—The March through the Wilderness—Insubordination of the Israelites—Territorial Conquests—Massacre of the Midianites—The "Promised Land"—Death of Moses—Speculations with regard to Mount Pisgah—The Authorship of the Pentateuch.

THE history of the Jews as a settled nation commences with their escape from the land of bondage, where, however, it should not be forgotten they had thriven and greatly increased in numbers. In Moses they had a leader of great power—a man of thought and action, of resource and self-reliance—a statesman, a legislator, and a religious guide. Had it not been for his energy and resolution, the Israelites would never have ventured on the risk of quitting Egypt against the will of Pharaoh; indeed, after their arrival in the deserts of the Sinaitic peninsula, they frequently murmured against Moses for the hardships which his advice had brought upon them, and, looking back with vain longing to the plentiful and luxurious food which they had enjoyed in the Land of Goshen, accused their chief of having led them into the wilderness with the design that they should perish of hunger and thirst. At one time their attitude was so menacing that Moses feared they would stone him; and nothing is more remarkable throughout the narrative than the absence of any deep faith, on the part of the people generally, that, as Moses constantly assured them, they were being supernaturally conducted into a country where they would become a flourishing people. It was only by the appearance of repeated miracles that they could be held to their allegiance, and they frequently looked back with regret to the land they had left behind them.

In their journey through the desert (1491 B.C.), the Israelites were attacked by an army under the command of Amalek, the prince of a nomadic tribe, inhabiting the peninsula of Sinai and the adjacent wilderness. The people thus settled in the time of Moses, and going under the name of the Amalekites, are thought to have dwelt originally on the shores of the Persian Gulf, and to have been driven in a westerly direction by the growth of rival powers. However this may have been, they were now in a position to molest the advancing Israelites, and a battle ensued, in which the Amalekites were defeated. The wanderers were then enabled to make their way as far as Mount Sinai, or Horeb, where the Ten Commandments were given, together with a large number of specific ordinances for the government of the Israelites in their daily affairs. The Biblical account of these events tells us that the commandments and regulations were delivered to Moses by Jehovah, from the midst of fire and smoke, on the summit of the mountain. "The Lord came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the Lord called Moses up to the top of the mount; and Moses went up."* Some of the Mosaic laws, it should be observed, reveal a degree of moral corruption among the Israelites which it was necessary to restrain with great rigour, hence certain vices were to be punished with great severity.

The basis of the Mosaic law was religious and dogmatic. It affirmed the existence of a single God, with whom no other beings were to be associated, and who was to be worshipped apart from idolatrous forms. The Jewish people were placed under the peculiar care and guidance of Jehovah, who had set them apart as an example to the world of the dealings of Providence with man, and as the depositories of the true faith. The Land of Canaan, or Palestine, which the Israelites had occupied before the settlement in Egypt, was again to be their inheritance. The soil was to be regarded as the property of Jehovah himself, under whom it

* Exodus, xix. 20.

was to be held by the people; and, such being the tenure, the occupants had no power to alienate their territorial possessions permanently. From these provisions it resulted that the government of the country was a theocracy. Jehovah, the king, was the immediate author of the laws, which were to be administered by judges, selected usually from the caste of the priests. In difficult cases, the decision was submitted to the Divinity through the agency of certain things called Urim and Thummim (meaning Light and Perfection), the exact nature of which has never been ascertained. but which appear to have been two objects worn by the high-priest on the inside of his breastplate; though some writers believe them to have rather been the twelve jewels, with the names of the tribes of Israel engraved on them, which were worn on the front of the breastplate, and which, according to this theory, were supernaturally illuminated when the response was given. A more direct communication of the will of Jehovah was by means of the prophets, of whom a constant succession was promised. The people were to be rewarded with prosperity if they kept the law, and punished with dire calamities if they broke it.

As much as possible, the Israelites were to be kept apart from other nations. The settlement of foreigners in Palestine, and the emigration of Jews into other countries, were discouraged, though not actually prohibited. If a Jew took up his domicile in a foreign realm, he forfeited his landed possessions in Palestine; and this of course acted as a great dissuasive. Besides, he found it very difficult to observe, when apart from his fellows, all the rites and ceremonies enjoined on him. Foreign conquests were apparently condemned by Moses, doubtless out of fear lest they should bring disasters upon Israel. The people were in the main to be agriculturists. Every head of a family, excepting those of the tribe of Levi, who, as priests, judges, and scribes, were supported by the institution of tithes, received a certain measure of land, which was the inalienable property of himself and his heirs. Trade and commerce were not greatly regarded: a remarkable fact when we consider the almost exclusive devotion of modern Jews to business pursuits, though the change may be readily accounted for by the altered position of the race. Mechanical labour was probably performed by slaves attached to the households of the

THE RAS SUFSAFEH (MOUNT SINAI).

great, and by the women; but in the building of the Tabernacle some of the mechanical arts were practised by freemen. Internal commerce was carried on by the three great feasts which were celebrated every year at Jerusalem, when men assembled from all parts, and doubtless took advantage of the opportunity for the exchange of commodities. Foreign commerce was discouraged, as tending to introduce idolatry, develop luxury, and involve the Israelites in quarrels with other nations. The system of caste was unknown, excepting as regards the tribe of Levi, from which, as we have said, the priests and learned men were selected.

In its political constitution, Judæa had a somewhat democratical character. Slavery, indeed, was permitted under certain conditions; but, apart from the slaves (who might be native Israelites), the faithful stood on a footing of equality, and Moses, when announcing any new laws, called together the congregation of his people—not, however, to consult their will, for they had no will in the matter, but that all might know what had been decreed. That he summoned them by deputies, rather than in their own proper persons, seems clear from their numbers, which were certainly considerable, if not equal to what is generally supposed. It would appear from several passages in the Old Testament that elders, captains of tribes, judges, and various officers, were sometimes invested with these functions; so that we have here the beginning of a representative system, though of a very crude and elementary nature. The tribal organisation sanctioned by Moses was a remnant of the patriarchal life. The number of the tribes was twelve, each of which had its chief, and was subdivided into greater and lesser communities, called families and houses of fathers. Contemplated from a political point of view, the twelve tribes were twelve distinct commonwealths, governed by the tribal princes, and under them by the heads of families. So distinct were they from one another, and so little controlled by any central authority, that they occasionally acted as independent states, and even made intertribal wars until the establishment of the monarchy. The descendants of Levi were not included in the twelve tribes, being scattered, in the fulfilment of their priestly and other offices, over the whole territory; but the number was made up by dividing the descendants of Joseph into two tribes, named after his sons Manasseh and Ephraim.

Taken altogether, the twelve tribes formed a species of Federal Republic, yet always with a decidedly theocratical character, as being under the direct kingship of Jehovah. Usually, but not invariably, they paid a certain amount of deference to a chief magistrate appointed over the whole, and at one time the judges exercised this power, though somewhat laxly. The tribes met in general diets, and formed a military bond for the common defence whenever danger threatened. The judges were in the first instance appointed by Moses (at the suggestion of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian), to relieve himself from the excessive labour of determining all causes by his own investigation. He therefore "chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens."* From each of these orders, beginning with the lowest—the rulers of tens—there was an appeal to the one above, and from the last to Moses himself. Judges were subsequently appointed in every city, and, though it would seem that the people were free to choose them, it commonly happened that they were Levites. In the general conduct of affairs, Moses was assisted, after a time, by a body of seventy legislators, selected out of the elders of the people. This was in fact a kind of senate, and is believed to have been only temporary. It probably ceased to exist after the tribes were settled in the promised land; yet it may have been the parent, in a later age, of the famous Sanhedrim, the supreme council of the Jewish people in the time of Christ, and the body before which Jesus was arraigned as a false prophet. The scribes, who were originally appointed during the Egyptian captivity, and who existed in every city, were the officers who kept the genealogical registers, apportioned the public burdens to each individual, and conveyed to the people the general's orders in time of war. These were the several grades in the official hierarchy of the Jewish commonwealth. They formed altogether a highly-organised social state, resulting in the creation, or at least in the intensifying, of a very distinct national character, which is perhaps the strangest in the history of the world.

The most important men in the Jewish community were the Levites, because the Levites furnished the priests, and the priests were the actual rulers in a state which was based on religion. In addition to the tithes which they received from the rest of the Israelitish body, the Levites had the first-fruits of all produce (amounting, it is supposed, to about a sixtieth part of the whole crop), and a certain proportion of every sacrifice. Even this was not all. These highly-endowed

* Exodus, xviii. 25.

officials enjoyed as their own property everything devoted to God, as well as the redemption-fees of the first-born of men and of unclean cattle; for, in memory of the Exodus, the eldest son was held to be consecrated to Jehovah, and to be redeemable only by an offering not exceeding five shekels,* which was to be rendered within one month from birth. As the animals reputed to be "unclean," and therefore unfit for human food, were very numerous, they furnished the Levites with a considerable source of income. The first-born of these animals were to be redeemed, with the addition of one-fifth of the value, or put to death, or sold, and the price given to the priests; and in all these questions of value the priest was the sole arbiter. In the case of clean animals, the first-born seem to have been made over to the priesthood absolutely, without the option of being redeemed. Moreover, the Levites had a share in the spoils taken in war, and some other articles; so that their revenues, derived from the property and industry of the people, must have been enormous. Still further, they had assigned to them, after their arrival in the Land of Canaan, forty-eight cities for their places of permanent residence, with an outlying suburb of meadow-land for the pasturage of their flocks and herds. In proportion to their wealth was their power; and the offices they held were numerous. Besides the priesthood, they filled all the learned professions, preserved copies of the sacred law, expounded difficult or doubtful questions arising under it, and read it over to the people once in every seven years. Many ceremonial offices were discharged by them, and, as long as the Israelites remained in the wilderness, they formed a guard about Moses, and also for the protection of the Tabernacle, or sacred tent in which the rites of the Jewish worship were carried on, and which was necessarily moved about from place to place while the people were yet wandering in the desert.

The origin of the Levites as a privileged body was due to a terrible event. Owing to the long stay of Moses on Mount Sinai, the people thought he was lost, and, turning at once to the idolatry which always possessed a great charm for these Israelites, besought Aaron, the elder brother of Moses, to make gods for them. Aaron offered not the least objection, but straightway fashioned a golden calf (such as may have been suggested to him by some of the figures of Apis which he had probably seen in Egypt), built an altar before it, and proclaimed that the following day should be a feast to the Lord. But as the people were making their burnt-offerings and their peace-offerings, and were feasting before the image, Moses returned, and in his anger utterly destroyed the golden calf. The reply of Aaron to his brother's interrogation was equivocating, and apparently designed to suggest the idea that the image which he had laboriously cast, wrought, and graved, had arisen as if by magic. He stated that, in answer to the demand for visible gods, he had told the people to break off any gold they might have. This they did, and gave it to him; "then," continued Aaron, "I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf."† Moses thereupon stood in the gate of the camp, and said, "Who is on the Lord's side? Let him come unto me." All the sons of Levi (who, nevertheless, appear to have taken part in the act of idolatry, for the narrative makes no exception whatever) responded to the summons; and Moses delivered these injunctions to them as a message from Jehovah:—"Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour."‡ The result was that about three thousand men were slaughtered. Aaron, who had made the image, and set up the altar, and proclaimed the idolatrous feast, was not punished, but shortly afterwards became high-priest, which office was perpetuated in his family. The peculiar position of the Levites, as priests and expounders of the sacred law, was consequent on this act of vengeance. But a tradition of blood clung to the tribe. Its members were the descendants of that Levi who, in association with his brother Simeon, massacred the people of Shechem, under circumstances of extreme treachery. We cannot, of course, repeat in these pages all the incidents of Biblical history; but the origin of the Levites as an ecclesiastical caste is too interesting to be omitted. The power which they exercised was so important that it is necessary to consider under what circumstances it arose.

It is probable that Moses wished the Jewish State to remain a theocratical republic, acknowledging no other kingship than that of Jehovah. Yet he anticipated that his countrymen would in time desire an earthly monarch, and therefore conferred on them power to receive one, while at the same time prescribing his duties. The choice of the king, at the commencement of a dynasty, was nominally to lie with the people, but really to be

* The shekel was equal in value to about 2s. 7d. English.

† Exodus, xxxii. 24. Compare verses 2, 3, and 4.

‡ Exodus, xxxii. 27.

by Divine appointment; the office was afterwards to be hereditary. It was imperative that the king should be an Israelite by birth and race. He was not to keep a strong body of cavalry, nor a great number of horses, nor was he to cause the people to return to Egypt. He was not to take to himself a number of wives, lest some amongst them should be the means of turning away his heart to idolatry. He was not to heap up large quantities of gold and silver. On his accession to the throne, he was to write a copy of the law as it appeared in the book of the Levites; and this writing he was to study all the days of his life. In after times, some of these stipulations were frequently broken. Besides the fundamental law enunciated by Moses, an agreement or covenant between the king and the people was sworn to by every monarch on succeeding to power. When the kingly office was established, the sovereigns arrogated to themselves the function of deciding causes, as if they had been also judges—a practice which resulted in some abuses, and in too great a concentration of power. The king had the privilege of making new laws, provided they were not at variance with the fundamental principles of the constitution. He could dispense with the punishments prescribed by Moses, and, on the other hand, could pass sentence of death on the priests themselves, even including the high-priest. It was part of his duty to reform abuses in religion; indeed, it cannot be doubted that the establishment of monarchy by the popular wish was an attempt to escape from the ecclesiastical tyranny of the Levites. The system of government conceived by Moses was a most remarkable instance of priestly predominance. By the time of Samuel it had become corrupt, and therefore intolerable,* and, as a necessary counterpoise, the king was armed with powers which Moses never contemplated. The change was in many ways significant. It was a movement of the democracy against a privileged order of society—of the secular against the ecclesiastical mind.

The relations of the Israelites with foreign lands were from the first of a very rigid character. With some countries a degree of intercourse might be held; with others, it was a mortal sin. Certain nations were devoted to absolute destruction: these were the communities occupying the territory which had been given to the Jews; and the reason alleged was that they might corrupt the chosen people by their idolatries. In the case of cities "very far off," the Israelites, in making war, were to observe a modified course. When a city surrendered after a siege, they were to do no more than smite every male with the edge of the sword, and take to themselves all the women, children, cattle, and booty. But the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites—inhabitants of the land which the Jews required for themselves—were to be exterminated without any exception whatever. "Thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth," is the terrible command of Moses.† It may at first sight appear strange that the same lawgiver could say, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;"‡ but it is evident from the context that the injunction was confined within the bounds of the chosen race, and that the neighbour was not to be found in foreign and idolatrous lands.

It was ordained by Moses that, after the conquest of Canaan, the soil should be divided by lot in equal portions among the Israelites, and should then be inalienable for ever. Nominally, the ground might be sold; but it reverted to the original owner, or to his heirs, at the time of the Jubilee, which was every half-century; and it might be redeemed on certain conditions even before the Jubilee year. Land vowed to God became the property of the priests, if not redeemed before that date.§ Every seventh year, as well as the fiftieth year, was regarded as a sabbath for the land, during which time the soil was to lie fallow, and there was to be neither sowing nor reaping, neither pruning nor gathering. As every forty-ninth year, according to this edict, was of necessity a Sabbatical year (being the seventh repetition of seven years), and as this was followed by the Jubilee, it is apparent that there were at that time two consecutive years of entire withdrawal from cultivation. A special blessing on the land was promised for every sixth year, so that it should bring forth fruit for three years; and it is probable that the Jews, being forewarned of the restriction, stored up corn and other commodities during the six years of cultivation, and were thus enabled to support themselves during the period of enforced barrenness. Yet, after all, the institution was found to be impracticable, and it gradually fell into disuse.

Filial obedience was strongly enjoined by the laws of Moses. Fathers were invested with very great power over their children, who, even after they had attained maturity, were in a position of

* "And it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel. . . . And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment."—I. Samuel, viii. 1—3.

† Deuteronomy, xx. 16. ‡ Leviticus, xix. 18.
§ Leviticus, xxv.—xxvii.

subjection to one at least of their parents. The cursing of either father or mother, persistent disobedience, and even gluttony and drunkenness, were crimes punishable by death; but some species of judicial process was necessary before the penalty could be inflicted. The judges in such cases were the elders of the city; and the populace generally were to be at liberty to stone the offender to death. Nothing is said as to any right of defence or of denial on the part of the accused person; and it can hardly be doubted that to bring such a charge was usually, if not always, sufficient to obtain condemnation. Fathers, and even mothers, might choose wives for their sons, and the sons had no choice but to accept them. The eldest son also had some degree of power over the younger ones, though to what extent is not known. Wives were generally bought, and in some cases their price was fixed by law; those who were not bought enjoyed greater freedom than the others. Polygamy was permitted, and occasionally concubinage; but both seem to have been sanctioned rather as concessions to immemorial custom than as things advisable in themselves. A large number of wives, however, was forbidden, and a plurality of female companions seems never to have been very common. After the Babylonish captivity, it ceased altogether —a remarkable circumstance in an Oriental race. Divorce was not regarded with favour; but it was allowed, and in the twenty-fourth chapter of Deuteronomy may be seen the conditions under which this right might be exercised by the husband. A man who disliked his wife might put her away by giving her a bill of divorcement, and she was then free to marry again; but if her second husband sent her away, or died, she was not permitted to return to the first. It is a remarkable circumstance that Moses connected no religious ceremony with the fact of marriage; but it is probable that there was some solemn ratification of the espousal with an oath, and that this was already observed at the time of the Exodus. Offences against chastity, if there were no mitigating circumstances, were punished by the offenders being stoned to death.

Slavery was sanctioned by Moses, but did not originate with him. He found it existing among several communities, and his own countrymen were not averse from it. But he placed restrictions on the custom, and his rules were as merciful as any recognition of the evil will permit. Captives taken in war were regarded as slaves; but servile attendants were to be purchased also. Under pressure of poverty, a man might sell himself for a slave, and parents could sell their children. An insolvent debtor, or a thief unable to make restitution, might be sold as a punishment. Slaves could hold property of their own, and a Hebrew was entitled to his freedom in the Sabbatical year and the year of Jubilee. Those of an alien race could be kept in slavery for ever. A master might beat his slave, but was punishable if he died under his hand; and personal injury to the bondsman or bondswoman entitled the sufferer to freedom. The State had its slaves, as well as private individuals: they were employed in menial labours for the service of the sanctuary. The condition of the day-labourers who were not slaves was likewise regulated by Moses. They were to share in the repose of the seventh day, and in the spontaneous produce of the Sabbatical year, and their hire was to be paid every day before sunset. The poor were favoured in many ways, though begging was discouraged. They had the right of gleaning, and portions of all crops were to be left for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. Moreover, the remains of second tithes and firstlings, which had been sacrificed as thank-offerings, were bestowed upon the needy. In all such enactments a very benevolent spirit was shown, and also in the commands which enjoined respect for old age, and consideration for the blind and the deaf. But the punishment of offences was for the most part very stern, and in modern times the Mosaic code has often been quoted in support of those who, forgetful of the widely different conditions of ancient and modern society, have resisted any amelioration of laws which to others have seemed too severe.

It is impossible not to see that such phrases as "Life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe" (Exodus, xxi. 23–5), were dictated in a spirit of rigid hostility to acts of personal violence. Yet Moses took measures to check the frequent resort to a species of *vendetta* which had long been practised by the Israelites, and which was evidently productive of great evil. The nearest relation of a person accidentally slain by another considered it his duty to pursue the homicide, and kill him with his own hands. The same custom still exists among the Arabs, the Afghans, the Corsicans, and some savage races; but it is obviously inconsistent with anything like a well-ordered and civilised community. Moses probably felt the impossibility of entirely uprooting this baleful habit; but he did his best towards moderating its effects. Six cities, out of the forty-eight assigned to the Levites for their permanent residences, were

appointed as places of refuge for man-slayers. Facility of access to these towns was provided, and he who escaped to one of them was safe from pursuit. At the death of the high-priest, he might leave the sanctuary without any fear of consequences. But the wilful murderer had no right of asylum, and might be torn away even from before the altar in the city of refuge itself. Under these conditions, the *vendetta* for accidental slaying seems to have become more rare, and in time to have disappeared altogether.

were numerous and minute, but need not be very particularly described in these pages. Sacrifices and offerings formed an important part of religion. We read of the burnt-offering, the meat-offering (consisting of meal, bread, and other vegetable products), the drink-offering, the peace-offering, the sin-offering, and the trespass-offering. In some of these sacrifices, animals were slain upon the altar, and the blood was sprinkled about. The peace-offering (which consisted of a slaughtered animal)

AARON AND THE ISRAELITES WORSHIPPING THE CALF.

Interest on loans was not to be taken from Israelites, but might be exacted from strangers. Within the circle of the favoured race, loans were regarded as a kind of alms; beyond those limits, they might be turned into a source of profit. The population was to be ascertained by a periodical census, and each individual paid a capitation-tax of half a shekel. Every man above twenty years of age was liable to be called out as a soldier; but practically there were certain exemptions, and it was usual for the Scribes to make a selection. Of the spoil taken in war, that which consisted of persons and cattle was distributed equally among the people; effects were the property of the soldier who seized them.

The ceremonial observances of the Jewish people

was afterwards eaten by the sacrificer. The sin-offering (also bloody) had reference, doubtless, to the idea of expiation and vicarious sacrifice. Fasts and feasts were included in the Jewish ceremonial law, and on the great day of national humiliation —the Day of Atonement—certain animals were slain by the high-priest, and the scape-goat was led out into the wilderness. This was the only fast commanded by Moses, but it was customary to observe some others, and their number had a tendency to increase in after times. The great annual festivals were three, each lasting seven days. These were—the Passover, to commemorate the "passing over" of the Israelites by the destroying angel when the first-born of the Egyptians were slain; the Feast of Pentecost, held

MARCH OF THE ISRAELITES.

at the end of harvest; and the Feast of Tabernacles, which occurred about the month of October. Some other feasts of a less important character were added. The Sabbath, it is needless to say, was observed with great strictness; the seventh year, as we have seen, was Sabbatical; and the seventh month also was distinguished by peculiar religious observances. The reverence for the number seven was associated with the belief that God created the world in six days, and rested on the seventh "from all his work which he had made."

Bribery and corruption on the part of judges were regarded as crimes of great magnitude. Trials were conducted in the gates of the cities, as being places of the utmost publicity. In capital cases, two witnesses at the least were required; but it was a remarkable feature of the code, at any rate in some instances, that, on conviction, the witnesses first, and the people at large afterwards, were to execute judgment by the irregular, prolonged, and terrible process of stoning.* This punishment was decreed for idolatry, as well as for a few other offences; and death was visited upon those also who contemned the decisions of the judges and priests. The methods of capital punishment employed by the Jews were numerous, and some were extremely severe; but the most stern were introduced after the time of Moses. Other punishments were exile, or the being cut off from the congregation of God; corporal punishment, in which case not more than forty stripes were to be inflicted; fines; and offerings made in atonement for malpractices. A man might be convicted capitally on his own confession, and this seems to have superseded the necessity for other witnesses. It is remarkable how completely the earthly lives of the Jews were filled with religious ideas. Indeed, it is difficult to understand how the usual offices of secular existence could have gone on beneath such a weight and entanglement of ritual. In particular, the regulations with respect to defilements and purification were so elaborate that it may fairly be doubted whether, as a general rule, they were carried out in their fulness. In later times we see traces of considerable relaxation of ceremonial observances.†

The account in Exodus states that the chief of these commandments and directions were given to Moses during the forty days and forty nights that he passed with Jehovah on the top of Mount Sinai; and that the injunctions were repeated, during another period of forty days and forty nights, after Moses had broken the first tables of the law, on seeing the idolatry of the people before the golden calf which Aaron wrought.‡ After the Tabernacle had been made, several of the instructions referring to matters of ceremonial and personal conduct were given within the consecrated place, where the presence of Jehovah was indicated by a cloud of glory. The Tabernacle was the predecessor of the more permanent Temple subsequently built by Solomon. In lieu of any visible image of the Deity, which might have led to idolatrous observances, the Book of the Law was deposited in the sacred ark, under the care of the Levites; and even Aaron, the high-priest, was to be careful how he entered within the veil before the mercy-seat, which was set upon the ark. During the halting of the Israelites in the desert, they dwelt around the Tabernacle as a military host, each tribe gathered under its own banner, and the whole forming a large camp, the order of which is very exactly described in the second and following chapters of Numbers. The army was disposed in four grand divisions, which, when not on the march, formed a military square, enclosing the Tabernacle in the midst. On the east side was erected the standard of the camp of Judah, which included the tribes of Judah, Issachar, and Zebulon. On the south, the standard of Reuben covered the tribes of Reuben, Simeon, and Gad. The tents of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin stood on the west; while on the north were those of Dan, Asher, and Naphtali. Within the larger square was a smaller one, composed simply of the tribe of Levi, so arranged that Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's sons, covered the east flank of the Tabernacle, the Kohathites the south, the Gershonites the west, and the Merarites the north. When the cloud of glory was lifted from the Tabernacle, the trumpet sounded, the standard of Judah was raised, and the three tribes that marched under it set forward. The Tabernacle was then struck and placed in waggons, which followed the rear of the leading column, escorted by a body of Gershonites and Merarites; for the charge of the sacred tent was confided entirely to members of the tribe of Levi. At the second sounding of the trumpet, the tribe of Reuben, with its associates, followed in the order of march, accompanied by the sanctuary,

* Deuteronomy, xvii. 7.

† In the foregoing summary, reference has been made to the English translation of the "Mosaisches Recht" of Michaëlis, the original of which was published in 1770–75.

‡ The first delivery of the commandments is recorded in the twentieth chapter of Exodus; the second, in the thirty-fourth chapter. The two accounts differ very considerably. Another version, similar to the earlier one in Exodus, is contained in the fifth chapter of Deuteronomy; and a fourth version (imperfect) seems to be discoverable in Exodus, xxiii. 10—19.

which was borne on the shoulders of the Kohathites. The division of Ephraim came next, and the three tribes under the standard of Dan brought up the rear, which they protected from the sudden attacks of the enemy.

The departure of the Israelites from Egypt took place, according to the accepted Biblical chronology (from which, however, there are many dissentients), in 1491 B.C. It was in the same year that the commandments and the other injunctions were delivered from Mount Sinai; and it was on the first day of the following year that the Tabernacle was set up. The camp before Sinai was struck on the twentieth day of the second month of the second year from the Exodus—namely, early in May, 1490 B.C. By what route the tribes made their way through the peninsula of Sinai, it is impossible to say; but the road was long and difficult, and the people murmured repeatedly at the hardships they were compelled to endure. Even Aaron and Miriam, the brother and sister of Moses, conspired against him, because of his having married an Ethiopian or Cushite woman, who was probably not the same as his Midianite wife. The malcontents were reduced to reason only by severe measures, and Aaron confessed that he had done very foolishly. On arriving at Kadesh, in the wilderness of Paran, a little to the north of the Sinaitic peninsula, it was determined to send out spies, to ascertain the nature of the country and the state of its defences. Twelve men were despatched on this errand, and, after an absence of forty days, returned with a report to the effect that the country beyond the desert was a very fruitful country, but inhabited by a warlike people, and interspersed with large walled cities. There was a difference of opinion as to the prudence of attacking the territory thus described. One of the twelve, named Caleb, believed that his fellow-countrymen were quite strong enough to vanquish any force by which they might be opposed in their attempt on the country. "Let us go up at ence," he said, "and possess it, for we are well able to overcome it."* Ten of the spies, however, said that the tribes in question were much stronger than themselves, and included the gigantic race of Anak. The Israelites thereupon declined to go out to battle, and even proposed to elect a captain, and return to Egypt. Joshua, the twelfth spy, then joined with Caleb in representing to the malcontents that Jehovah could give them the victory if he pleased. But it was not until the ten cautious spies had been struck dead by a pestilence, and the people had been told that they should wander forty years in the wilderness, during which time all above twenty years of age should perish, that they expressed their willingness to march against the nationalities in their front. This was some time before the close of 1490 B.C. Moses refused to go with them, and they were disastrously defeated.

The obvious way of the Israelites from Egypt into Canaan was by the Isthmus of Suez, which would have avoided the Sinaitic peninsula altogether. But, after moving some distance in that direction, they had been ordered to turn southward, and, after crossing the intermediate waters, had found themselves in the desert country which has the main body of the Red Sea on the south, the Gulf of Suez on the west, and the Ælanitic Gulf on the east, while on the north it communicates with the land which they were ultimately to possess. The reason given for this change of route was that they would otherwise come into conflict with the warlike people to the south of Palestine. As it was, however, they had to encounter several of the tribes and petty nationalities dwelling in the wilderness and in the countries to the north-east, and a good deal of fighting ensued in various localities. In 1453 B.C., the King of Edom refused them a passage through his dominions. During the same year, Miriam died at Kadesh, and Aaron on Mount Hor, and the latter was succeeded in the priestly office by his son, Eleazar. The Israelites were still on the frontiers of Edom; but they declined a hostile collision with the people, and, after the death of Aaron, marched towards the borders of Moab—a territory lying to the west of the Syrian desert. Before they could reach this country, it was necessary that they should pass through the land of the Amorites. The king of that realm, however, refused them permission to go forward, and, attacking the Israelitish camp, was entirely defeated. The Hebrews then possessed themselves of the whole Amorite territory, together with that of Og, King of Bashan, who had also endeavoured to arrest their progress.

The spirit of faint-heartedness which had previously weighed down the Israelites seems now to have wholly departed, and they stood forth a military and victorious race. Their conquests were indeed important, for they placed them in possession of a realm stretching from the vicinity of the Dead Sea to Mount Hermon, near the southern extremity of Anti-Libanus. Nevertheless, they had avoided the territory of Moab, round which they had marched by a circuitous route.

* Numbers, xiii. 30.

The Moabites, and also the Beni-Ammi, their neighbours on the west, had been recently driven out by the Amorites from the country which the Jews had now seized; and, fearing they might be dispossessed once more, they united with the Midianites in a confederacy against the strangers. To this period is referred the incident of Balaam, the Mesopotamian prophet, which does not come within the view of history. It was shortly afterwards that the Midianities seduced many of the Jews by their idolatrous and licentious practices; and Moses was directed (after the punishment of the offending Israelites themselves, of whom many thousands were slain) to make war on them. Being vigorously attacked, they were defeated, and all the adult males were put to the sword. But this was not enough. The stern spirit in which these struggles were carried on is shown by the indignation of Moses when he heard that the women had been saved. On the return of the destroying army to the camp, he commanded his followers to kill every male among the little ones, to slay every mature woman, and to spare the female children as wives for themselves. The Midianite women had been principal agents in seducing the Jews to idolatry. It is remarkable that Moses himself had taken a Midianite wife—Zipporah, the daughter of Reuel, or Jethro, the priestly ruler of the race, though perhaps of a different section from that with which the Israelites came into hostile contact. Nothing can be more terrible than the story of the punishment of the Midianites for their sins, as it appears in the thirty-first chapter of Numbers. The massacre brought a splendid booty to the Israelites, of which the Levites took a large proportion.

The attack on the Midianites was in 1452 B.C., towards the latter end of what is called the forty years' wandering in the wilderness, though by this time—eight-and-thirty years after the hesitation of the Hebrews to attack the people in the walled cities—the wilderness was passed, and the fruitful countries in the valley of the Jordan had been reached. The movements of the Israelites from point to point of the deserts which they traversed, as obscurely intimated in the Old Testament, are involved in perplexities which the learned have tried in vain to elucidate. In this place it has not been attempted to do more than indicate the main course of events, which reveals an irregular progress from south to north, varied by some retrogressions and deviations. The final days of Moses were passed in giving to his people those additional directions and ordinances which are contained in Deuteronomy, and of which the substance has been already set forth. He likewise appointed Joshua as his successor when he should have departed. After the slaughter of the Midianites, the Israelites were encamped on the terraces of the hills fronting the lower stream of the Jordan, to the east of that river, and opposite the city of Jericho. The "promised land" was on the western side, and Moses was not to enter it. He beheld it, however, from the top of Mount Pisgah, whence he looked over the whole territory, from the river to the utmost main. Almost immediately after, as it would seem, he died on the summit of the mountain, in the year 1451 B.C., and with him ended the generation which had left Egypt forty years before, excepting Caleb and Joshua, who had brought the good account of the country which the other spies regarded with apprehension. The rest of the older Israelites had perished in the wilderness, or died in battle, or been smitten with pestilence. Their work was now to be carried on by the generation which was young when the spies delivered their report.

It is recorded in Deuteronomy that Moses was a hundred and twenty years old at the time of his death, but that his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated. He was buried in a valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth-peor; but his sepulchre was never known. The children of Israel, it is added, wept for Moses thirty days, and readily paid obedience to his successor. The fame of this great lawgiver is the common property of all Western Asia. Mohammed regarded him with profound veneration, and the Mussulmans of our own day profess to show his tomb on the western side of the Jordan, between the Dead Sea and St. Saba. This, however, is the side opposite that which is indicated in the Old Testament. The mountain tract which witnessed the final scene in the life of Moses went by the general name of Pisgah, and its summits are said to have been dedicated to several divinities. It was from one of these peaks, called Nebo—apparently after a Chaldæan god worshipped by the Babylonians and Assyrians—that Moses saw the promised land, and gave up his parting breath. Pisgah was probably a portion of the larger range called the mountains of Abarim. The locality associated with the death of Moses would thus seem to be very exactly fixed; yet no spot has ever been discovered which answers to the place described in the Bible. The difficulty rises from the fact that none of the peaks that have been fixed upon are "over against Jerico."

The authorship of the Pentateuch—the Five Books of Moses, consisting of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy—has been

the subject of much discussion, and it is now agreed by many of the best commentators that Moses cannot have been the actual author of those books, in the usual sense of the word, although he may have embodied his laws in writings from which the Pentateuch was afterwards in part compiled. The reasons for this conclusion most apparent on the surface are, that Moses is always spoken of in the third person; that he is at times referred to in terms of laudation which he would not have used towards himself; and that in the last chapter of Deuteronomy his death and burial are recorded, with the addition of the words, "But no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day." These, however, are not the only reasons; there are others, resulting from a minute examination of the text. The received authorship of the Pentateuch was first controverted by Spinoza in a theological work issued in 1670; but the question did not attract much notice until the publication at Brussels, in 1753, of a treatise on the subject, written by Dr. Astruc, Professor of Medicine in the Royal College at Paris, and Court Physician to Louis XV. He had observed that throughout the Book of Genesis, and as far as the sixth chapter of Exodus, traces were to be found of two distinct documents of an earlier date, in one of which the name of the Creator must have been given as Elohim, in the other as Jehovah; and he believed that, besides these two principal documents, ten others had been employed in the composition of the earlier part of the Pentateuch. Subsequent inquirers supposed that the Five Books consisted merely of a number of fragments, strung together without any order or design.

In more recent times, it has been conjectured by German scholars that the narrative of the Elohist, or earlier writer, was the foundation of the work, and that the Jehovist, or later writer, made additions and commentaries of his own, while sometimes adopting the text of the original, and sometimes re-writing it. There is even a possibility that the Elohist himself followed still more ancient authorities, so that the actual origin of the Pentateuch is beyond identification. In the whole of Genesis, and in the opening chapters of Exodus (not, indeed, in the English version, but in the Hebrew text from which that version was made), the name Jehovah occurs in some sections, and that of Elohim in others, and it is said that the style and idiom of the two are strongly contrasted. Moreover, the same story is sometimes told by both writers, with certain variations, and the two accounts appear in different chapters or different verses of the Bible. It should here be stated that Elohim seems to be the appellation of the Deity as manifested in his creative and sustaining energy, while Jehovah designates his nature with relation to the Jewish race. Jehovah, in fact, was the name of God as national God of the Israelites, and Elohim as the universal God. In the English translation of Genesis, Elohim is usually translated "God," and Jehovah "the Lord." The questions involved in the authorship of the Pentateuch cannot in this place be discussed with any fulness; but it is known that the Hebrew Scriptures fell into a state of great confusion and corruption during the period of the Jewish Monarchy, and that Ezra restored, corrected, and edited the whole set of volumes after the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity. It would seem, therefore, that the Pentateuch, as we now possess it, is not of older date than about the middle of the fifth century B.C.

CHAPTER XII.

THE HEBREW THEOCRACY.

Ancient Traditions with Respect to Moses—Military Achievements of Joshua—Division of Canaan among the Israelites—General Character of Canaan, or Palestine—Incomplete Subjugation of the Country by the Jews—The Israelites corrupted by the Aborigines—Idolatrous Systems of Neighbouring Lands—Death of Joshua—Weak and Perilous Condition of Israel—Government of the Judges—Scattered Operations of the Tribes—Attack of the Danites on Laish—Civil War between the Benjamites and the other Tribes of Israel—The Religious Organisation of the Jewish People—Oppression of the Israelites by Foreign Races—Rule of Gideon—Unsuccessful Attempt of Abimelech to establish a Monarchy—Death of Abimelech—Jephthah and the Ammonites—Conquests and Death of Samson—Eli and the Philistines—Sacerdotal Corruption.

SEVERAL Greek and Roman authors, who, subsequently to the time of Alexander the Great, collected the traditions of the Exodus floating about Syria and Egypt, assert that Moses succeeded in crossing the Jordan, and establishing his power in the country afterwards called Judæa. However disputable this may be, it is at any rate worthy of note that, as already related, the Arabs show what they call the tomb of Moses on the western shore of the river; that a headland at the north-western end of the Dead Sea, into which the Jordan flows, is still called by a name which has considerable affinity with Pisgah; and that on the northern part of this rocky mass is situated the great Mussulman sanctuary of Neby Mûsa (Moses). Nevertheless, the Biblical account is distinctly to the effect that Moses did not cross the Jordan, but died and was buried in the Land of Moab, on the eastern shore. The conquest of Canaan was reserved for Joshua, who had long been the chief adviser of Moses in all military affairs. It is believed that he was in his eighty-fifth year when he succeeded to the chief command; but his vigour had not deserted him. Before putting his army in motion, he sent out spies to reconnoitre the country beyond the stream, and, receiving a favourable report, began his march. The Jordan was passed, and in a little while Jericho fell into the hands of its assailants. A subsequent attack on Ai was repulsed with some loss; but the town was ultimately taken, and, like Jericho, utterly destroyed. On these occasions, the Mosaic command, to slaughter every living thing in the cities of Canaan, was thoroughly carried out.* The land was at this time occupied by the Amorites, the Hittites, and the Hivites. The two latter had been subjected by the former, with whom the principal power resided; and the tribes lived separately in mountain districts under their own princes, who numbered from thirty to forty. Their political and social organization was probably not strong; but they had the advantage of walled cities, and of a land easily defended.

The southern Canaanitish chiefs, seeing the danger by which they were threatened, formed a league against the invader, and, ranging themselves under the command of Adoni-zedek, the monarch of Jerusalem, marched against Gibeon, a city the inhabitants of which had entered into some species of terms with the Israelites. The Gibeonites, being overmatched, sent messengers to Joshua, who hastily marched to their relief, and, suddenly falling on the confederates, entirely defeated them. Another frightful slaughter ensued, and such terror was struck into one portion of the Canaanites that the southern districts—or at least the greater part of them—submitted to the conquering host, who shortly afterwards returned to their standing camp at Gilgal. These events occurred in 1451 B.C., the year in which Moses died. In the following year, the northern princes followed the example of their southern brethren, and entered into mutual engagements against the destroyer. A large and formidable army encountered Joshua at the waters of Merom (a small lake formed by the Upper Jordan), but was signally discomfited. The superiority of the Israelites was now so marked that it would not have been surprising had all resistance ceased after this reverse. But it must be remembered that the Canaanites were fighting for their country, for their false gods, for their very existence. Every motive of superstition, of conviction, and of self-preservation, would impel them to continue the struggle to the utmost. They found their cities destroyed, their lands appropriated, and their men, women, and children massacred. But they appear to have continued their idolatrous practices, and to have refused to acknowledge the validity of Joshua's claim, that all these things were done by the express command of the Deity. They had

* It is not proposed to do more in this Chapter than give a brief outline of events with which every reader is familiar in the Bible. Matters of controversy are purposely omitted.

their own view of the matter, and asserted it with so much resolution that it took the invaders seven years to establish their supremacy; and even then a good deal of territory remained unconquered, including many cities of importance.

The possessions thus obtained were divided in 1444 B.C. The division was by lot, which was regarded as a manifestation of the Divine will.* Although the promised land was situated entirely on the western side of the Jordan, the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, had already taken up positions on the eastern shore, and were not disposed to relinquish them. Their warriors had assisted in the conquest of the western land, and were now dismissed to their homes. The Levites received no territorial inheritance, because, being devoted to the priesthood and other cognate professions, they were supported by the whole mass of the people. The original tribe of Joseph had by this time been divided into the two tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. To the former and to the half of the latter that had crossed the Jordan were assigned the central districts, consisting of fertile hills and valleys. The south fell to the share of Judah. The tribe of Benjamin received a narrow strip of land between the hills of Judah and of Ephraim. Simeon's portion was the southernmost of all. Dan was to the east of Benjamin; and Issachar, Zebulun, Naphtali, and Asher were to the north of that portion of the tribe of Manasseh which was planted west of the Jordan. At the same time, the six cities of refuge were fixed at Kedesh, Shechem, Hebron, Bezer, Ramoth, and Golan, though some of these places had not then been acquired; and forty-eight cities were made over to the Levites. Timnath-serah, in Mount Ephraim, was set apart as Joshua's peculiar inheritance; and the Tabernacle of the congregation was established at Shiloh.

THE DEFEAT OF ADONIZEDECK.

The country which in the time of Joshua had partially, but by no means entirely, come into the possession of the Israelites, was that which until then had been termed Canaan, but which is now known as Palestine, or the Holy Land. The original inhabitants are supposed to have been Hamites: they were divided, as we have seen, into several tribes (one of which consisted of the

* The choice by lot consisted, apparently, of counting a number of small stones contained in a pocket which the priests wore on their breasts. It has been thought that the Urim and Thummim alluded to in the last Chapter were in fact these lots. (Duncker's "History of Antiquity," Book III., chap. 4.)

Canaanites proper); and all were idolaters in religion. We know very little of their character and mode of living; but it would seem that, at the time of the Jewish invasion, they had attained a considerable measure of civilisation. The cities of Canaan were numerous, rich, and well defended, and it is probable that an active commerce was carried on with other countries of the East. The literal meaning of the word "Canaan" is "Low-land;" and a large part of the territory is a wide maritime plain, stretching towards the Mediterranean. Between this plain and the Jordan, however, there are many eminences, often rising to the height of mountains. In some parts, the land is singularly fruitful; in others, it is rough, sterile, and forbidding. The austerity of many of its hills and valleys must have seemed to the sunny-tempered Greeks remarkably suited to what they described as the morose and gloomy nature of the Jewish people. But the country suited the in-comers in other ways also. It gave them a possession worth fighting for. It placed at their disposal cities already built, a civilisation already elaborated, ground already brought into culture, forests of valuable timber, and the unexhausted wealth of mines. In the more favourable parts, the soil produced corn, wine, and oil; fruit-trees were abundant; and the woods dropped honey, deposited in the hollows of old trees by its winged makers. The position of the domain, moreover, as lying midway between the East and the West, and in immediate connection with the Mediterranean, held out admirable opportunities for traffic, should its new masters care to take advantage of the opening thus afforded.

In superficial extent, however, Palestine was but small. If we except the lands east of the Jordan, where, as we have said, the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, were settled, the territory of the Israelites was less than a hundred and forty miles in length, and barely forty in average breadth.* By the deep and narrow depression of the Jordan valley, this territory is cut off from the rest of Asia, which lies behind it to the east. Northward, it is shut in by the ranges of the Lebanon; to the south are the deserts of Sinai; and the west is bounded by the Mediterranean. The two great empires with which Palestine came into contact were Assyria and Egypt, from both of which it suffered. The valley of Cœle-Syria, lying between Libanus and Anti-Libanus, formed, together with the strip of coast constituting the maritime portion of the Jewish possessions, the only means of approach by which the armies of either dominion could attack the other. The consequence was, that the people of Israel were sometimes crushed between the rival forces of the Asiatic and the African potentates. Yet the mountainous nature of the land afforded a protection, which doubtless on many occasions saved the main part of the country from invasion and conquest. The name "Palestine" (in Hebrew, *Palesheth*) was originally applied only to the country of the Philistines, on the sea-coast; but the Greeks afterwards extended it to the land of the Jews, which they termed Syria Palæstina, or Philistine Syria, for Syria was often held to extend to the borders of Egypt.

The land divided by Joshua included provinces which were still in the grasp of the Canaanites. Some of these territories were never entirely subdued, so that certain of the tribes failed to obtain all that was promised them. In the scheme shadowed forth to Moses, the Canaanites were to be utterly extirpated, in order that idolatry might be destroyed. Blood had flowed in torrents; but the Canaanites survived in many places, and their religious rites were beginning to influence those of their conquerors. The partial failure of the scheme, notwithstanding the special advantages of the assailants, is not without an explanation. It was due to the war-chariots of the aborigines. The fact is stated in a very remarkable passage in the Book of Judges (chap. i., ver. 19), where we read:—"And the Lord was with Judah; and he drave out the inhabitants of the mountain; but could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron." This happened in a great many localities, and it was from the unvanquished people of the valleys that the mischief afterwards proceeded. The tribe of Dan was forced back again into the mountains by the power of the Amorites, and the tide of conquest slackened after the first great successes. This tribe and Simeon were to have had Philistia; but, with the exception of a short period under the rule of Solomon, Philistia maintained its independence. Sidon was given to the tribe of Asher; but the land was never enjoyed by them. The Hebrews had but little trouble in defeating the Canaanites as long as they attacked them in the mountain districts; but in the open lowlands the war-chariots of the aborigines, which were numerous and efficient, but which could not operate amongst rocks and defiles, proved extremely formidable to the invaders, who were often held in check, and sometimes driven back from ground which they had occupied. With

* Such are the measurements given in Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible;" but some geographers make the dimensions of the land rather larger.

respect to this matter of the subjugation of Canaan, the contradictions in the ancient narratives are extremely perplexing. We read of places taken by the Israelites, and later on find them again in possession of the idolaters. The probability is, that there was a flux and reflux of conquest; and it is at least certain that the Canaanites were not wholly exterminated, although the slaughter in some places was terrible. After a while, the cohesion of the Israelites seems to have been lost. The tribes fought separately, each on its own account, and a good deal of the national strength was thus dissipated. Scattered bodies of the Canaanites remained in fastnesses of exceptional strength, or in fortified cities which the enemy was unable to reduce. Sometimes treaties were made with these sturdy warriors, who thenceforward occupied a position subordinate to the Israelites, but free from actual interference.

The heathen women were, as usual, a fruitful source of corruption to the chosen people. Even before the death of Joshua, it is plain that some of the Jews had become idolaters; for, in his last address to the congregation, the successor to Moses exhorted his auditors to put away the strange gods that were among them, and to incline their hearts to the Lord of Israel.

To understand correctly the position of the Israelites in their new home, it is necessary to examine in some detail the religious beliefs of the neighbouring communities, as we find them recorded in ancient authors. The particular forms of idolatry practised by the Canaanites are not very minutely described; but they were probably the same as those which are known to have been observed by the Phœnicians, the Syrians, and other nations of that part of Asia. The Phœnicians should perhaps be reckoned among the Canaanites; but, although a cognate race, as they themselves asserted, they were not identical, and are generally referred to as a distinct variety of the Asiatic population. The principal divinity of the Phœnicians and Canaanites was Baal, of whom we read frequently in the Old Testament. He was the supreme male deity of those communities, as Ashtoreth was their supreme female deity. The worship of Baal was very widely spread. We may trace it in the Sinaitic peninsula, in the Land of Canaan, in Phœnicia and all her colonies, and among the Babylonians; and it possessed such charms for the Israelites that they frequently adopted it, and could only with difficulty be won back to their own severer worship. The Celtic deity, Beal, is probably the same as Baal, and the bonfires still lighted at certain seasons in Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, are relics of the honours once paid to this Phœnician god. High mountain summits were consecrated to Baal, who appears to have been identified with the sun, and with the vivifying power of the solar rays. His appellation is to be traced under many varieties, including Baal-peor, Baal-zebub (or Beelzebub), Baalim, and Bel. It also enters into the composition of the names of many places. Around the altar of Baal the priests leaped and danced with frantic gesticulations, like the Corybantes of the Greeks, often gashing themselves with knives, as a means of extorting from the divinity the favour which was sought. Some of the rites of Baal were exceedingly licentious, and in this connection he had an affinity with the Roman god Priapus.

Ashtoreth (the Astarte of the Greeks and Romans) was the feminine counterpart of Baal, and represented the moon, as the other represented the sun. The Assyrian goddess Ishtar was probably the same as this deity; and the conception mingles with that of Aphrodite, or Venus, in one direction, and with that of Diana in another. In a physical sense, Baal was the active or masculine part of the reproductive principle, while Ashtoreth, or Astarte, was the passive or feminine. The same idea, as we have already seen, was embodied in the Egyptian myths of Osiris and Isis; indeed, wherever religion is based on symbolism expressive of the subtle operations of Nature, such a conception is always one of the first to assume a definite

ASHTORETH.

and sensuous form. The worship of Ashtoreth took place in the recesses of woody hills, especially in the mountain forests of Lebanon. Particular trees, such as the pine and cypress, were sacred to her; the pomegranate, as the symbol of fruitfulness, was associated with her name; doves were nurtured in her temples, and rams brought to her

altars. Fish also were dedicated to this goddess, as being inhabitants of the water, an element which typified the fecundising power of moisture. Under certain aspects, she was a virgin goddess, and delighted in immaculate victims: no married woman could enter her temples when they were dedicated to this idea. She was also the goddess of war and of death, and, as such, took pleasure in deeds of blood. The eternal fire burned on her altars, tended by virgins, any infraction of whose vows entailed a dreadful penalty. Self-mutilation was practised before her shrines, and enthusiasts beat themselves with knotted whips until the blood ran down. It is a singular fact that in this deity, as in some others, the most opposite ideas were embodied. Ashtoreth was at once the chaste goddess and the goddess of wantonness—the goddess of slaughter and the goddess of reproduction. But doubtless she was differently worshipped in different places, and had distinct appellations to indicate her several offices. In several countries, fishes received divine honours. The national deity of the Phœnicians was a fish-god named Dagon, whom we find likewise amongst the Chaldæans and Assyrians, and who was pictured as a combination of man and fish. He was worshipped with peculiar solemnity at Gaza and Ashdod, two of the principal cities of Philistia.

One of the darkest and most malignant gods of the idolatrous nations was Moloch, or Molech. He presided over war, and fire was his element. Human sacrifices were offered to this unrelenting power; blood was shed with frightful prodigality on his altars; and his name is even now a synonym for whatever is cruel and remorseless in the perversions of religious belief. Whenever a great victory had been achieved, the worshippers of Moloch sacrificed thousands of captives as an expression of thanksgiving. When a campaign was about to commence, the favour of the god was solicited by the slaughter of victims selected from the worshippers themselves. The same execrable rites were performed if great reverses occurred, or if any special calamity overtook the people. Sanchoniathon, an ancient Phœnician historian, whose works exist only in the form of fragments preserved in the writings of later Greek authors, records that at periods of national misfortune the Phœnicians sacrificed one of their relatives

DAGON.*

* A small terra-cotta figure, now in the British Museum.

to Saturn, who seems to have been a deity of similar character to Moloch. The Carthaginians, who were of Phœnician origin, are said by Diodorus Siculus to have offered in public sacrifice, when besieged by Agathocles of Sicily, two hundred of the noblest children of the republic, while three hundred others were voluntarily devoted by their parents. Infants and youthful victims were supposed to be peculiarly acceptable to Moloch. They were made to "pass through fire" to his idol; and this is generally understood to mean that they were burnt alive. Jewish interpreters of the Scriptures contend that the children simply moved between two burning pyres, as a purificatory rite; but there is only too much reason to believe that these ceremonies were of the most barbarous character.

Tradition affirms that the image of Moloch was of brass, hollow, and fashioned like a man, excepting that the head was that of a calf. The arms were extended, as if to receive the sacrifice; and, fire having been kindled within, the infant was put into the hands of the deity, and consumed in the midst of a great noise of drums, beaten by the priests lest the parents, hearing the cries of the victim, should repent of their offering. Such, at least, is the account given by Rabbi Kimchi, a Jewish commentator of the thirteenth century after Christ. The testimony of several ancient authors, as well as of the Bible, shows that children were frequently offered up to the idols of the Canaanites and other nations. "In Carthage," says Diodorus Siculus, "there was an iron image of Cronos, which held out the hands in a downward position, so that the victim placed upon them rolled into a cavity filled with fire." Plutarch says that the mothers were compelled to stand by without lamentation or sighing, as all such manifestations of feeling were held to confer dishonour. Moloch was more especially the god of the Ammonites. He was honoured in Rabbah, their capital city, and southward as far as the river Arnon, which runs into the Dead Sea.

Nature-worship is at the bottom of all idolatry, and, as the operations of Nature seem often cruel, her favour is propitiated by bloody sacrifices, and the infliction of elaborate tortures. There is, indeed, a higher Nature-worship, as well as a lower; but in communities of imperfect civilisation, or of gloomy and savage passions, this adoration of the cosmic forces takes the form of a diabolical fetichism. Where there is no conception of a spiritual Being, superior to the blind movements of matter, and subjecting them to the harmonious evolutions of law, there will be an overmastering dread of what may lurk within the earth, the

forests, and the rivers—of what may flash in tempest from the heavens, or rise in deluge from the sea. Where there is fear, there will be superstition; and where there is superstition, the offspring of fear, there will be cruelty, the child of both. With the Canaanites and their neighbours, murder formed part of the popular religion, and the mental agony of mothers was deemed as acceptable as the physical agony of babes. Human sacrifices, especially of women and children, were offered to Ashtoreth as well as to Moloch.

Two specially evil facts are to be observed in the idolatrous rites of the Canaanites, Phœnicians, and Syrians. One was their cruelty; the other was their licentiousness. The barbarity practised in some temples was equalled by the immorality practised in others. The ceremonies performed in many of these fanes cannot be described in their fulness, and the temptations offered by sensual indulgence were among the greatest dangers to which the Israelites were exposed. Moses knew how prone his people were to yield to such seductions, and took what measures he could to avert the peril, though often without effect. In Egypt he had seen idolatry in its best forms. The gods and goddesses of the Nile were rather fantastic than vicious. It is doubtful whether human sacrifices were ever offered in their temples: if at all, it was only in very remote times.* Nor were their rites characterised by scenes of profligacy: we have the testimony of Herodotus that the Egyptians considered other nations blamable in this respect.† It was among the communities of Western Asia that the Jews became acquainted with the foulest aspects of Paganism.

BAAL.

Joshua died (according to the accepted Bible chronology) in 1426 B.C., at the age of a hundred and ten years. He left the conquest of Canaan in a very incomplete state, and the affairs of the Jewish community less promising than they had been in the early days of rapid and almost tumultuous success. Many of the tribes held their ground, and it must already have become evident that there was no longer any prospect of that complete destruction of the heathen which Moses had led his people to expect. The idolatrous communities were in many parts sufficiently numerous and sufficiently strong to make frequent incursions, and to keep the Israelites in a state of constant apprehension. Only the tribe of Ephraim was able to reach the Mediterranean, and that on a portion of the coast where there were no harbours. All the ports remained with the Philistines and Phœnicians, and the invaders did not even attempt to wrest these seats of commerce from the hands of their ancient possessors. The power of Tyre and Sidon increased as the population of the adjacent lands, displaced by the conquerors, crowded into them, until the Hebrews were imperilled by the vicinity of commonwealths richer and more fortunately situated than their own. On the other hand, the Israelites were broken up into a number of small republics, possessing little cohesive force; and had there been any great military kingdom in their immediate neighbourhood, it is not improbable that they would have been overwhelmed.

The high-priest Eleazar, the son of Aaron, died about 1420 B.C., and with him departed almost the last living memento of the Mosaic age. Israel was now governed by Judges, who, for a period of three hundred and thirty-one years, from the death of Joshua to the beginning of the Monarchy under Saul, administered the affairs of the several tribes. These officers were divided into two orders; the one called Princes, the other Elders. As they were believed to be human interpreters of the will of Jehovah, their character was regarded as sacred. In their capacity of rulers, they were not appointed until some time after Joshua's death, and it would be impossible to state with any exactness the political functions which they exercised. The law of Israel being a religious law, the Judges had a quasi-sacerdotal character—at least, in the earlier ages; but it is probable that in some cases they were appointed by a species of popular election. During this period of Jewish history, there was in truth no government beyond what was purely local. The political and social system was doubtless nothing more than what Moses established when he appointed "rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens." Sometimes, however, we find the Judges acting as warriors for the deliverance of Israel from oppression. In this light they appear as military dictators, and it has even been suggested that their powers were almost wholly martial, and were conferred or assumed irregularly, as occasion arose.‡ Nevertheless, it is difficult

* Sir Gardner Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians.

† Herodotus, II. 64.

‡ Dean Milman's History of the Jews, Book VI.

to believe that their position was so circumscribed. That they really administered the law, is apparent from various passages in the Bible; and if the government of Israel, such as it appears to have been, was not carried on by them, it would be hard to say by whom it was exercised.

Each of the tribes acted on its own behalf during this troubled period, and engaged in such wars as it considered prudent, without any reference to the other bodies, except where some special alliance was made for the promotion of a special end. Thus, the tribes of Judah and Simeon united in an attack on the King of Bezek, whom they defeated and captured. It is probable, though not absolutely certain, that the forces of Simeon also joined with those of Judah in besieging Jerusalem, where they succeeded to the extent of taking the lower town. This they burned; but the fortress on the higher grounds (according to Josephus) defied their utmost efforts, and they accordingly marched against Hebron, which nineteen years before had been appointed one of the six cities of refuge for Israelites who had inadvertently killed a man. Hebron (the former Kirjath-arba) was now taken, and the confederates, having subjugated all the hill-country around Jerusalem—which, together with the districts further south, was appropriated by the tribe of Judah—next attacked the provinces of Gaza, Askelon, Zephath, and Ekron. Here likewise they were successful, and the lands so conquered were thenceforward possessed by the Simeonites. The tribe of Benjamin warred on the Jebusites, and the house of Joseph conducted an expedition against the Hittites, whose chief city, Bethel (more anciently called Luz), they captured, by the help of one of its inhabitants, about 1425 B.C. These victories sufficed to give military predominance, within certain limits, to the tribes of Israel; but they were far from resulting in the extermination of the aborigines. The union of the conquerors and the conquered took place in Canaan, as it has taken place in many other lands. "And the children of Benjamin," we read in the Book of Judges (i. 21), "did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem unto this day." The same thing happened in several other places. The people of Bethel, however, were slaughtered, with the exception of the man who had aided the attacking force, and the members of his family.

The precarious situation in which several of the Israelites were placed, and which resulted from their inability to subdue the whole body of the Canaanites, led to some disastrous occurrences, of which the defection of a portion of the Danites was one of the most remarkable. The people of the tribe of Dan were cooped up among the mountains west of the Jordan, from which the Amorites prevented their issuing forth. They greatly desired to enlarge their boundaries, and believed they saw an opportunity of doing so at the expense of the people of Laish, a Sidonian colony living in an unguarded position in the northern part of Palestine. Before making an attack, however, they sent out five spies to ascertain the probabilities of success. These men lodged with a person named Micah, who was an idolater, and had hired a certain Levite to act as priest to his gods. The spies consulted the Levite as to the prospects of the expedition, and received so favourable a forecast that they were induced to adopt the religion of their counsellor. Encouraged by the hope of victory, six hundred of the Danites advanced against Laish, which they took with terrible slaughter. After changing the name to Dan, they established themselves there; but the idolatry of the inhabitants infected the conquerors, and the worship of images succeeded to the national faith of Israel. The incident is chiefly noticeable as showing the state of anarchy into which the affairs of the Jewish people had fallen, the lawlessness with which exposed communities were attacked by isolated bodies of men, and the tendency of several tribes among the Israelites to imitate the religious systems by which they were surrounded. "Every man," according to the narrative in the Book of Judges, "did that which was right in his own eyes." But where every man is a law to himself, the supremacy of evil is very soon established.

A still more lamentable occurrence was the civil war between the Benjamites and the other eleven tribes of Israel, arising out of the refusal of the former to surrender some criminals who had committed an atrocious act in their territory. Three battles took place between the opposing forces, in two of which the eleven tribes were defeated with the loss of forty thousand warriors, while in the last they prevailed against the sons of Benjamin. This was followed by an indiscriminate massacre, by the burning of cities, and by the extermination even of the beasts belonging to the offending tribe. Had they been idolaters, the Benjamites could not have been treated with greater sternness; in fact, only a few hundreds were left alive. The tribe ultimately recovered itself; but there was a time when it came very near extinction, and the victors themselves, in a sudden access of remorse, asked how it was that there should be one tribe lacking

VIEW IN THE VALLEY OF THE JORDAN.

(From a Photograph taken for the Palestine Exploration Fund.)

in Israel. Such was the miserable condition of these favoured communities not long after their settlement in the promised land. It is idle to make any attempt to fix the exact dates of the capture of Laish by the Danites, or of the civil war between the Benjamites and the other eleven tribes; but these events were probably in the early days of the Jewish settlement in Canaan, though after the death of Joshua.

The priestly power was hardly more organised than the secular. Its centre was at Shiloh, in the territory of Ephraim, where the Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant had been established and where the high-priest officiated with his subordinates. The people went thither to sacrifice, and a yearly festival was held in honour of Jehovah. But there were other sacred spots also: as at Ramah, in the land of Benjamin; at Mizpeh, in the same district; at Mizpeh beyond the Jordan; at Bethel, on the borders of the territories of Ephraim and Benjamin; and at Gilgal, on the western side of the river. At all these places, as enjoying a peculiar sanctity, Jehovah was invoked, and offerings were made. Persons would set up altars for themselves, and, having done so, would keep a priest at their own expense. This, indeed, was often for the sake of introducing idolatrous rites; and sometimes those very rites were engrafted on the Jewish worship, as in the case of the man Micah and his mother.

Weakened by internal dissension, and by the imperfections of their political state, the Israelites were exposed to attack on all sides, but especially towards the north, where the aborigines were particularly strong. A Mesopotamian prince overran the whole dominion, and imposed a heavy tribute on the people. This condition lasted eight years, at the end of which time the Jews were delivered from their bondage by the heroism of Othniel, a relative of Caleb, and the first of the military or predominant Judges of Israel. The eight years were from 1402 to 1394 B.C., if we follow the chronology of Archbishop Ussher; but other dates have been suggested. Then, after a prosperous interval of forty years, the land was oppressed by Eglon, the ruler of the Moabites, who acted in alliance with the Amorites and Amalekites. Othniel was now dead; but another deliverer came to the rescue of the people, and, in 1336 B.C., Ehud, a Benjamite, discomfited the invaders, and once more established the independence of Israel. The exploits of this hero began with the assassination of Eglon, and ended with the complete emancipation of his countrymen from the rule of the Moabites, who, it is added, were slain to a man.

After the death of Ehud, the Israelites were conquered by a monarch named Jabin, who called himself King of Canaan. His seat of government was at Hazor, a fortified town, situated, apparently, between Ramah and Kedesh, on the high ground overlooking the Lake of Merom. This was the principal city in Northern Palestine, and its possession by a Canaanite shows how uncertain were the prospects of the Jewish race in that direction nearly a century and a half after the passage of the Jordan. Jabin had nine hundred chariots of iron, which enabled their owner to achieve an easy conquest over the weak and divided tribes to the south. The subjugation is referred to the year 1316 B.C., and the foreign domination continued until 1296, when a fresh movement of Jewish nationality took place, with very favourable results. The yoke of Jabin must have been extremely light, for during these twenty years the Hebrews were left to the enjoyment of their own laws, and elected their own rulers in all matters that affected their personal interests. The probability is that Jabin did little more than impose tribute on the people, after a fashion very usual with the Eastern conquerors of that time. At any rate, the conquered were sufficiently independent to follow their accustomed ways, and to organise an insurrection against the Canaanite. The Judge of Israel then holding power was a woman named Deborah, who gave her decisions under a palm-tree between Ramah and Bethel. It was owing to her counsels that the revolt began; but the military command was in the hands of Barak, a man of Kedesh.

The leader of the Canaanites was Sisera, evidently a soldier of vigour and capacity. On hearing that Barak had assembled on Mount Tabor a body of ten thousand men belonging to the northern tribes, he lost no time in gathering together the nine hundred chariots of iron which belonged to his master, and in giving battle to the enemy. These chariots generally inspired the Hebrews with the utmost dread, and, indeed, had often been the means of inflicting on them very serious reverses. But on this occasion the charioteers were routed, and Sisera himself, alighting on his feet, fled before the face of the conqueror. He took refuge with a woman named Jael, who, while affecting to give him succour and protection, treacherously murdered him, as he lay sleeping in her tent, by driving a nail into his head (1296 B.C.). The act seems the more inexcusable to us as a state of amity existed between Jabin, the Canaanitish king, and Heber,

the husband of Jael. Yet Deborah rejoiced greatly in the deed. "Blessed above women," said she in her song of triumph, "shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be; blessed shall she be above women in the tent. . . . She put her hand to the nail, and her right hand to the workmen's hammer; and with the hammer she smote Sisera, she smote off his head, when she had pierced and stricken through his temples."* It is also related that the whole army of Sisera was destroyed, without an exception. The rule of Jabin was thrown off, and the Israelites again enjoyed peace for the space of forty years. Considerable obscurity rests over this period of Jewish history. The perpetual oppressions and deliverances bear a remarkable resemblance to one another, and it has even been imagined that the account of the Canaanitish discomfiture in the eleventh chapter of the Book of Joshua, and that in the fourth chapter of the Book of Judges, refer to the same Jabin, King of Hazor, and to the same series of events.

These troubles affected the tribe of Judah less than the other communities: partly because of the situation of that tribe in the south, a considerable distance from the powerful nationalities which dwelt in the northern division of Canaan; partly owing to the strong defences presented by the rough and mountainous hills west of the Dead Sea; and partly by reason of the great numbers to which the tribe had grown. The men of Judah counted far more than any of the other bodies; and this excess increased with the progress of time. Nevertheless, the tribe was not left entirely at peace; for the Arabs to the south, and the Philistines to the west, were animated by a hostile spirit, and sometimes made attacks on their Jewish neighbours. The Phœnicians do not seem to have interfered with the Israelites, who formed with them peaceful relations, which subsisted from age to age. But the presence of danger was continually making itself felt, and, after the death of Deborah and Barak, the Midianites and Amalekites—Arabian tribes dwelling to the south of Palestine—broke into the very heart of Israel, and subjected the people by force of numbers and by military valour. The depression of the national spirit was extreme; but at length a man of humble origin, named Gideon, belonging to the small tribe of Manasseh—probably to that part of it which was established to the west of the Jordan—led the Israelites to renewed victory. He collected under his banner thirty-two thousand men of the houses of Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, and with a part of this force attacked the Midianites with such suddenness and fury that they fled. Other successes followed, in which the Ephraimites shared, and the enemy was driven from the land, with the slaughter of many thousands. Gideon was recognised as the chief man in Israel. It was even proposed to make him king; but this dignity he refused, although the office of Judge was discharged by him until his death. His reason for declining the kingly title was that Israel was a theocracy, and ought to remain so. "I will not rule over you," he said; "neither shall my son rule over you: the Lord shall rule over you."†

The repeated deliverances of Israel were always followed by relapses into idolatry. The Jewish people had no special zeal for the religion which Moses taught—no spiritual enthusiasm such as that which, many ages later, animated the disciples of Mohammed when converted to a similar religion, and which even to this day is observable in most professors of the Moslem faith. The Hebrews seem never to have been deeply impressed with the belief which Moses made known to them, and which was reinforced from time to time by teachers of exceptional genius and fervour. They besought the assistance of Jehovah whenever they were involved in national distress, but, under ordinary conditions, preferred the wild and sensual worship of the Canaanites. Strangely enough, Gideon himself, though of course without any such design, occasioned one of these aberrations from the path which had been marked out for the Israelites. He requested his followers to give him the golden earrings which formed part of the spoil they had taken. They gave him not merely these, but also a number of other costly ornaments, together with purple robes; and Gideon fashioned out of the stuffs an ephod, or sacred vestment, such as was worn by the high-priest.‡ This he deposited in his native city of Ophrah, with what design does not appear; but the people were not long before they made it an object of idolatrous worship. The defection began even during the life of Gideon. It became still worse when the death of their leader, about 1209 B.C., delivered the people from all restraint.

That matters were tending towards the creation of a monarchy is shown by an event which occurred in the very year of Gideon's death, or not long after. Abimelech, a natural son of Gideon, assassinated sixty-nine of his brethren, and persuaded the

* Judges, v. 24—26.

† Judges, viii. 23.

‡ Such is the meaning usually given to the phrase in Judges, viii. 27; but the thing may possibly have been a golden image.

Shechemites, through the influence of his mother's relatives, to elect him king. It would appear that he ruled over a league of cities, of which Shechem was the chief; but his power did not last above three years. At the end of that time, the people revolted during their master's absence. Returning hastily with a considerable force, the deposed chieftain took the town by storm, destroyed it, and sowed the ground with salt, as a token of lasting desolation. He then marched against the city of Thebez, but, while besieging the stronghold, was struck on the head by a piece of millstone, thrown by a woman. Feeling that he had received a mortal injury, yet disliking that men should say a woman had slain him, he commanded his armour-bearer to thrust him through with a sword; and his death occurred, after this unexpected fashion, in 1206 B.C. The episode of Abimelech was doubtless something beyond the mere conspiracy of an ambitious desperado. It was connected with the growing desire of at least a portion of the Jewish people to attain to more permanent political conditions than they had previously enjoyed. It may also have been partly due to a movement of idolatry against the religious system of Moses. Even if Abimelech himself retained the faith of his fathers, it is certain that the Shechemites, and some of the other communities, had become pagans, and that the son of Gideon was willing to rule them on that understanding.

The monarchy which Gideon refused to sanction, and which Abimelech had made a vain endeavour to establish, still remained an unaccomplished aspiration, and the state of anarchy continued to increase. The Philistines and the Ammonites poured over the country, committing terrible havoc, which the Israelites were totally unable to resist. It was a period of general idolatry, during which the peculiar religion of the Hebrews was almost wholly forgotten. Political disruption and religious apostasy had reduced the nation to the lowest point of misery, when a man named Jephthah, the natural son of one Gilead by a foreign woman, acquired a position of command among the Israelites on the eastern side of the Jordan. The people were contemplating a revolt against the Ammonites, and it appeared to them that no one was better fitted than Jephthah to take command of their forces. His military genius was soon proved by the defeat he inflicted on the enemy, who was utterly discomfited in no fewer than twenty cities, and finally driven from the soil. It is worthy of note that when, previous to the outbreak of hostilities, Jephthah sent messengers to the Ammonites, demanding why they had invaded his land, the king answered by raising the point of territorial right, from which it appeared that the Jews were still regarded as a set of freebooters, who had forcibly possessed themselves of a country to which they had no title. To the question why he had passed the Jewish boundaries in hostile array, the Ammonite monarch replied: "Because Israel took away my land, when they came up out of Egypt, from Arnon even unto Jabbok, and unto Jordan. Now, therefore," he continued, "restore those lands again peaceably." The rejoinder of the Jewish chieftain threw the whole blame of hostilities on the original opposition of the idolatrous races to the entrance of the Israelites into Canaan. He also asserted the Divine right of his countrymen to occupy the land they then held, and their determination to appropriate any other territory from which, by the aid of Jehovah, they might drive out the previous inhabitants.*

After the defeat of the Ammonites, Jephthah was engaged in a civil war with the Ephraimites, who alleged that they had been slighted in not being called upon to help in expelling the strangers. The circumstances of the quarrel are not very clear; but the upshot was that Jephthah defeated his antagonists, and, intercepting the fugitives at the fords of the Jordan, slaughtered forty-two thousand of them in cold blood, as they were endeavouring to escape to their own side of the river—the western side. By these stern measures, however, he crushed his adversaries, repressed opposition, and established his own power, though it is doubtful whether that power extended to the western side of the Jordan. His ascendancy, whatever may have been its limits, lasted not longer than six years; but it terminated only with his life, which came to a close about 1137 B.C.

Fresh troubles had already broken out in another part of Israel. The Philistines had entered the land, which, before their expulsion, they are said to have oppressed for forty years—a duration of time repeatedly assigned in the Old Testament to any remarkable succession of events or condition of affairs. It was then that Samson arose, and assumed the leadership of his countrymen. This famous chieftain, belonging to the tribe of Dan, prosecuted hostilities against the invader with considerable, if partial, success, until at length taken prisoner, and deprived of sight; in which state of captivity and blindness he died in 1120 B.C., after having judged his own part of Israel twenty years. The Philistine dominion continued in the main during the whole life of Samson; but the successes

* Judges, xi. 12–24.

of that leader may have prevented its extension. The judicial authority of Samson seems to have been confined to the district bordering on Philistia; and it was probably not very dominant even there.

Division of power was undoubtedly one cause of the Jewish misfortunes. During part of the time that Jephthah was reigning on the eastern side of the Jordan, and a little before Samson began to rule over the territory of Dan, the high-priest Eli was exercising some species of command in the south-west of Palestine. It was in his day that the Philistines broke into the land; and it was at the very close of his life that those warlike strangers seized the Ark of the Covenant as one of the spoils of a great victory which they obtained over the Hebrews, who had brought the sacred receptacle on to the battle-field of Eben-ezer, in the belief that it would be a guarantee of security and triumph. The Ark was restored by the Philistines seven months later; but the sudden intelligence of its capture, together with the death of his two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, caused the death of the aged Eli, about 1141 B.C.—the year before that in which Samson began his judgeship. The state of moral corruption into which the Israelites had fallen at this period is shown by the outrageous conduct of the sons of Eli, who, in the fulfilment of their hereditary ecclesiastical offices at Shiloh, committed acts of gross profligacy in the very entrance to the Tabernacle—acts which Eli reproved, indeed, but did nothing to check. Such was the condition of degeneracy and political disruption to which some three centuries of anarchy had reduced the countrymen of Moses. The Jewish race was divided into jealous and often antagonistic communities; idolatry was rampant from Dan to Beersheba; antagonistic nations vexed the land, and laid tribute on the people; the traditions of Israel were gradually fading out before the influence of foreign customs; and the ministers of religion itself were guilty of open wickedness within the sacred precincts. But at that very time a boy was growing up, under the guidance of Eli, who was destined to renew the national life, and to bring about a change in the constitution of the country, productive of very striking and important results. This was Samuel, who is usually described as the first of the unbroken succession of Prophets, and who was the means—though the unwilling means—by which the Theocratical was converted into the Monarchical Government.

CHAPTER XIII.

SAMUEL, SAUL, AND DAVID.

The Government of Samuel—Demand for a Kingdom: Selection of Saul—Oppression of the Israelites by the Philistines—Defeat of the Philistines at Michmash—Renovation of the Country under the Rule of Saul—Rupture between Saul and Samuel—Early Years of David—Death of Samuel—Persecution of David by Saul—Defeat of Saul by the Philistines—Death of the King—Acknowledgment of David as King by the Tribe of Judah—Civil War with Ishbosheth—David Sovereign over all Israel—Capture of Jerusalem by David—Military Organisation of the Jewish Monarchy—General Character of David's Reign—Removal of the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem—The Religious Hierarchy—David and Bathsheba—Revolt of Absalom—Suppression of the Revolt, and Outbreak of Fresh Disturbances—The Latter Years of David's Reign.

SAMUEL, the restorer of Jewish prosperity, was from his infancy dedicated to the service of the Tabernacle. He was the son of Elkanah, a descendant of the second branch of the Levites, who dwelt at Ramah, the situation of which is not very clearly known, though it seems to have been in the vicinity of Mount Ephraim. It is possibly on this account that Elkanah is sometimes described as an Ephraimite; but in truth his descent is very obscure. The mother of Samuel was a woman of strong religious convictions. She had long been married to Elkanah without bearing him any children, and in her grief and mortification she made a vow that, if she were permitted to give birth to a son, the child should be dedicated to Jehovah all the days of his life. The son, when born, was called Samuel, meaning "The Asked of God." In fulfilment of his mother's vow, he was brought up as a Nazarite (that is, as one set apart for religious service), and on this account was educated and trained in the Tabernacle, under the direction of Eli. While yet a child, he laid claim to Divine inspiration, and his speeches drew multitudes to Shiloh. Later on in life, he gathered the people together in Mizpeh, one of the heights of Benjamin to the north of Jerusalem, the name of

which signifies "Watch-tower." Here he was offering a sacrifice when the Philistines suddenly burst in upon the assembled worshippers, and made a violent attack on them. They were defeated, however, and the Israelites, aided by a heavy thunder-storm which threw the Philistines into confusion, pursued them with great slaughter for a considerable distance. As a consequence of this success, Samuel was promoted to the office of Judge, and, while dwelling in his native city of Ramah, visited from time to time the chief sanctuaries on the west of the Jordan. Whether his rule included the eastern side, is doubtful.

The defeat of the Philistines at Mizpeh is assigned by chronologists to 1120 B.C.—the year in which Samson died while in his state of thraldom to the same nationality. It resulted, we are told, in the complete expulsion of the invaders from Israel; and at the same time peace was concluded between the Hebrews and the Amorites. The independence of the Jewish race was thus once more accomplished. The devotion and eloquence of Samuel had induced the mass of the people to forsake the idolatry in which they had long been sunk, and to accept once more the monotheism of Moses. But the evils of a debased sacerdotal rule remained unabated, and Samuel appears to have been blind to the facts, or unable to remedy them. In his old age he made his two sons Judges over Israel; and it is recorded of these men that they sought after lucre, received bribes, and perverted judgment. There is nothing to show that Samuel took any steps against this corruption, and the redress of the wrong-doing was left to the Elders, who doubtless acted in obedience to a popular demand. In the nations around them, the Jews saw a much safer and more settled form of government under the rule of kings. They recollected that Moses himself had made ordinances for a monarchical constitution, which he anticipated might arise in the fulness of time; and they saw no reason why they should be debarred from a political organisation which, whatever its drawbacks, was undoubtedly possessed of some advantages.

The people, therefore, went to their priestly leader, saying, "Thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways. Make us a king to judge us, like all the nations." Samuel, however, was deeply imbued with the principles in which he had been brought up, and which doubtless appeared to him inseparable from truth and righteousness. He was displeased with the request of the Elders, and set before them the evils that would result from kingly government. But his arguments had no effect, and the demand for a king was strongly reiterated. Samuel had done his utmost. He loved the old order, in spite of its degeneration from its original purity. In the gloomiest spirit and the darkest colours, he painted the future of the nation if a throne should be set up in their midst; and he threatened the people with the wrath of Jehovah if they submitted themselves to an earthly monarch. But when neither his persuasions nor his menaces proved of any avail, he assented to the general desire, and chose for the race of Israel (about 1095 B.C.) the first king they ever possessed.

Whether there was anything in the nature of a popular election, it is not easy to say, for the several accounts contained in the First Book of Samuel are confused and contradictory; but at any rate there was doubtless a previous nomination by the prophet. Samuel selected for this high office a young man named Saul, the son of Kish, a Benjamite. He is described as a person of great physical comeliness, unusually tall, and gifted with remarkable strength and agility. His disposition, as circumstances afterwards showed, was passionate, wayward, and inclined to violence, with a moody taint which looks like madness. But he had qualities which served to recommend him to the popular mind; and a great military success which he achieved shortly after Samuel had anointed him with oil, and presented him to the people, confirmed the youthful Benjamite in the position to which he had been advanced. This exploit consisted in the relief of Jabesh-Gilead, a town east of the Jordan, which was being besieged by the Ammonites in 1095 B.C. The discomfiture of the investing force was complete, and the power of the Ammonites was entirely broken by the energy and soldierly qualities of the newly-appointed sovereign. Nevertheless, the position of Saul, though nominally regal, was in fact scarcely to be distinguished from that of the military Judges who had arisen from time to time before him. It may even be doubted whether he really exercised as much power as those commanders; for he was under the control of Samuel, who had placed him in the office which he filled, and who, while remaining in the background, was still a powerful influence in the direction of affairs. The sway of Saul extended over but a narrow territory, although all the tribes had accepted his leadership. The Philistines were again so dominant in the land that Saul could hardly maintain himself within the limits of his tribe. An officer belonging to that formidable nation had long been

THE BATTLE OF MICHMASH.

stationed in Saul's own field; and it was rather in the direction of Jabesh-Gilead that the renovated power of the Jews was making itself felt.

It is evident that the victory over the Philistines at Mizpeh was less thorough than it had appeared at the time. However crushing it may have been for the moment, its effects were only temporary, for the Philistines returned after awhile, and seem to have been more powerful than ever. They established fortified camps at Michmash and Geba—towns situated in the central parts of the country west of the Jordan. The subjection of the Israelites was indeed so extreme that the southern tribes (who had been more utterly conquered than the rest) were compelled to fight against their own countrymen. Obviously, the spirit of rebellion existed in many quarters; but the vigour of the foreign rule prevented its manifestation. The Israelites were deprived of their arms, and, that they might not be supplied with others, all the smiths were removed from the land, so that the very agriculturists were forced to take their shares, their coulters, their axes, and their mattocks to the Philistines, whenever they required sharpening. It was therefore necessary, if the power of Saul was to be maintained, that so degrading a state of bondage should be brought to a close as soon as possible; and the ruler of Israel determined to make an attack in force on the invaders stationed in the territory belonging to his own tribe—that of Benjamin. The account in the First Book of Samuel (xiii. 1, 2) states that this resolution took effect when Saul had reigned two years; but it has been remarked that, as the son of Kish was a young man when chosen to fill the office of king, and as, on the occasion of his first attacking the Philistines, he himself had a son old enough to be entrusted with an important command, the interval must have been much greater.

At the head of his army, Saul encamped opposite the fortifications of Michmash, the garrison of which he prevented from issuing forth. His son Jonathan made a simultaneous attack on a detachment of the Philistines stationed at Geba, and obtained a brilliant victory in 1093 B.C. (popular chronology). The invaders, however, were stimulated by this reverse to make fresh efforts for the complete subversion of the Jews, and accordingly brought together an army of 30,000 chariots, 6,000 horsemen, and countless infantry. The display of force was so great that, despite the exhortations and encouragements of Saul, the Israelites were seized with panic fear, and crept into caves, thickets, and obscure clefts in the rocks. By this desertion, Saul and Jonathan were left with only a small force of devoted followers; yet their courage and resolution did not fail them. An opportunity for striking an effective blow soon occurred. The Philistines divided their host into four parts, and that which had so recently been formidable, and which threatened the entire conquest of Israel, became seriously enfeebled by dispersion. One portion of the invading army was left in Michmash; three other portions were sent off to various quarters. This gave the means of victory into the hands of the Israelites. In 1087 B.C., the garrison of Michmash was attacked and routed, having apparently come forth into the open ground; and the moment success was achieved, the Hebrews who had hidden themselves in terror were seen creeping out of their holes and places of safety, that they might join in the pursuit.

There are three accounts in the First Book of Samuel as to the way in which Saul became king over the Israelites. In the first (chapters viii., ix., and x.), we are told that the people sought a monarch to rule over them because of the corruption of Samuel's two sons, and that Samuel selected an obscure youth of the small tribe of Benjamin, whom he anointed and charged with kingly duties; after which came the crushing defeat of the Ammonites. The second account (chapters xi. and xii.) seems to make the assumption of regal power consequent on the victory of Saul over those invaders, or at any rate posterior to the invasion.* According to the third account, Saul became king after the defeat of the Philistines at Michmash: "So Saul took the kingdom over Israel" (xiv. 47). Looking at these several narratives from the ground of historic probability, it seems likely that, in the first instance, Saul occupied a position similar to that of the military Judges, owing to his proved capacity as a soldier, and that after various successes he obtained the throne at a mature time of life. Events thus pointed him out as the fittest man for the regal office; but doubtless the misconduct of Samuel's sons, and the general anarchy, had much to do with the popular desire for a monarch.

The success at Michmash increased the power of Saul, and enabled him to organise his forces more thoroughly, so as to redeem the country both from external oppression and internal anarchy. In his warlike operations (which were incessant, especially against the Philistines), he was greatly

* We find, indeed, some allusion to "renewing" the kingdom (xi. 14); but the passage seems doubtful, for immediately afterwards we read:—"And all the people went to Gilgal; and there they *made* Saul king," &c. (xi. 15.) See also xii. 12.

assisted by his gallant son Jonathan, and by his cousin Abner, who was made commander-in-chief of the army. Whenever Saul observed a man of unusual strength and valour, he drafted him into his forces. Within the district of Benjamin alone—a small territory, but one requiring special military assistance, because of the oppressions of the Philistines—Saul maintained a large body of trained warriors, who seem to have been the nucleus round which his subsequent armaments were formed. Thus the military traditions of the race were once more aroused, and the enemies of Israel began to discover that their superiority was threatened by a powerful will and an indomitable spirit. If the rule of Saul was in some respects despotic, it had at any rate the quality of vigour, and it lifted the Hebrew people out of the abasement into which they had fallen. Saul was a devoted champion of the national church. He built altars to Jehovah, offered sacrifices, and consulted the priests before undertaking any important enterprise. His observance of religious ceremonials was punctilious; but his waywardness was sometimes extreme. After having expelled all the wizards and persons supposed to be possessed with evil spirits, he consulted the Witch of Endor when he could obtain no response from his own shrines. On the whole, however, the country was undoubtedly a gainer by the establishment of the Monarchy. The Jewish nation was re-established and consolidated by the genius and the might of Saul. Yet in the first instance the Monarchy had none of the external signs of splendour or dominion. When not fighting the enemies of his country, Saul led a private and domestic life at Gibeah. The pomp and haughtiness of Oriental sovereignty had not yet arisen in Israel.

Some years after the affair at Michmash, Saul was commanded by Samuel to proceed against the Amalekites, and to exterminate every man, woman, infant, ox, sheep, camel, and ass. This sanguinary command was in the main executed by the king and his army; but there was a failure in some particulars, which led to a contention between Samuel and Saul. The circumstances show the struggle which had already arisen between the popular and the priestly power. It is related that all the Amalekites were slain with the exception of Agag, their king, who was carried away captive; but the sheep and oxen were saved at the general desire of the people, that they might be offered as a sacrifice to Jehovah. This was denounced by Samuel as a grave offence, because it did not literally fulfil the commands which he had conveyed to Saul. The king at first endeavoured to justify himself, but, on being threatened by deprivation of his power, replied with great humbleness, "I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord, and thy words; because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice."* Nevertheless, Saul's entreaties that Samuel would pardon him were sternly rejected; and the king was again told that his sovereignty would be bestowed upon another. Then Samuel gave orders that Agag should be brought before him, and, on his appearance, hewed him in pieces. After slaying Agag, Samuel departed from Saul, and refused to have any further association with him. These events are referred, in the popular chronology, to the year 1079 B.C.

Having thus repudiated Saul, Samuel fixed his attention on a young man of the name of David, the son of Jesse, and the great-grandson of Boaz and Ruth, whose story is related in the Book of Ruth. The native place of David was Bethlehem; but he was not of purely Jewish descent, for Ruth was a Moabite, and he had also some Canaanitish blood in his veins. As a boy, he was remarkable for his beauty; and, though short of stature even when a man, he had the swiftness and agility of a wild gazelle, and arms of such extraordinary strength that, according to tradition, he could break a bow of steel. Being the youngest of the family, his time was employed in keeping his father's sheep; and he was thus engaged when, in 1063 B.C., Samuel appeared at Bethlehem, ordered a sacrificial feast to be held, and anointed the youth as the future King of Israel. Shortly afterwards, Saul, being troubled by one of his moody fits, sent for David to comfort him with the music of his harp, in which he was reputed to have especial skill; and thus the rivals became acquainted. David subsequently distinguished himself by slaying Goliath of Gath before a great battle which Saul fought against the Philistines; but his success aroused the jealousy of the king, who still retained his power, notwithstanding the words of Samuel. It does not appear whether David himself had any conception of what was implied in the act of anointing him with oil at the sacrificial feast. The probability is that he did not know he had been consecrated for the kingdom. Saul likewise may have known nothing of the fact; but the popularity of David excited in him an apprehension that such an event might come to pass in the fulness of time. He made open attempts upon the life of the young man, and secretly conspired

* I. Samuel, xv. 24.

against it. At this period, David lived in the house of Saul, by whom he had been appointed captain over a troop of one thousand men.

It is very difficult, or rather it is impossible, to ascertain the exact course of events during these days of growing popularity on the part of David, and of ever-darkening fear on that of Saul. The king seems to have acted with the caprice of a maniac, and, though hating the son of Jesse, permitted him to marry his younger daughter, Michal. Yet the attempts upon the life of David were renewed, and the threatened man was at length obliged to escape from his house during the night, and to seek refuge at or near Ramah, where he could consult with Samuel. He may now have been informed of the dignity to which he had been appointed, and Saul probably came to understand that David was his actual rival for the throne. Why Samuel was so long in carrying out his design of substituting David for Saul is not apparent; but in truth he died without seeing the project realised. The death of the prophet occurred about 1060 B.C., before which year David had fled from place to place to avoid the wrath of the king. This persecution continued into a later time, and was attended by many adventures. David would seem to have carried on a species of guerilla war at the head of a small body of adherents; sometimes attacking the Philistines and other idolatrous races, and occasionally coming into collision with the forces of Saul. A more agreeable feature in his conduct was the generosity with which, on two occasions, he spared the life of Saul when he had him in his power. On the whole, he was not very successful in his resistance to the king. Twice did he throw himself upon the Philistines for protection, and once upon the Moabites.

The final years of the king's reign were years of tumult and anxiety. Saul was constantly fighting with the invaders of his realm; yet, in spite of temporary successes, the land was still troubled by hostile nations. The Philistines had never been expelled, and were capable of inflicting serious ravages. At the time when Saul consulted the Witch of Endor, they were concentrating their forces for a grand attack on the Israelitish kingdom, and the peril was all the graver from the presence of David, with six hundred warriors, at the court of Achish of Gath, one of the petty Philistine sovereigns. The conduct of David in this respect seems incapable of justification. That he was ready to fight against his own countrymen, is an unavoidable inference from the statements contained in the First Book of Samuel (chapters xxviii. and xxix.). He repined when Achish, yielding to the suspicions of the Philistine chieftains, who thought him a doubtful ally, dismissed him and his fighting men before proceeding to the battle. Even if we suppose, as some have suggested, but as the text does not appear to warrant, that the real design of David was to betray the Philistines by suddenly deserting to the other side, we merely substitute treachery to his friend and protector for treachery to his country. Saul, if he knew these facts, might have thought himself bound to oppose David as an enemy of the Hebrew commonwealth, and the ally of its mortal foes; though this, of course, would not offer any palliation of the earlier persecutions. It may perhaps be said that David, immediately afterwards, made some amends by fighting against the Amalekites, who, it appeared, had not been entirely destroyed when Saul went upon the expedition decreed by Samuel. But it is apparent that his motive was personal rather than national. He simply desired to punish the Amalekites for having devastated the city of Ziklag, in the territory of the Philistines, which Achish had given him.

In the final battle of Saul against the Philistines, on the morrow of his visit to the Witch of Endor, the Israelites were utterly defeated. Saul's three sons, Jonathan, Abinadab, and Melchi-shua, together with a vast number of others, were slain. Saul himself committed suicide by falling on his sword, and the Philistines possessed the cities of the Hebrews, even on the eastern side of the Jordan. The commonly-reputed date of these events is 1056 B.C. The bodies of Saul and his sons were treated by the Philistines with great indignity, and fastened to the wall of Beth-shan, whence they were rescued by a party of valiant men from Jabesh-Gilead, who were under great obligations to the king. At that town the remains were burned, and, the bones having been buried under a tree, the men of Jabesh fasted seven days as a sign of mourning and lamentation.

David was resting in his city of Ziklag, after his pursuit and chastisement of the marauding Amalekites, when a messenger arrived there with intelligence of the Israelitish defeat, and of the death of Saul and his sons. The man was an Amalekite, and hoped to obtain favour with David by relating that he had himself killed Saul at his own request. David, however, mourned for the late king, and for Jonathan, and for the misfortune which had befallen the nation. As the messenger produced the crown and the armlet of Saul in confirmation of what he said, David ordered him to be slain, and shortly afterwards proceeded to Hebron, where the men of the

tribe of Judah anointed him king. This was only a partial acknowledgment of the son of Jesse, and his title was disputed in other divisions of the country. Ishbosheth, the youngest son of Saul, yet survived, and, with Abner, the commander-in-chief of the Jewish armies, was now in safety beyond the Jordan. By the tribes of that eastern region he was hailed as the rightful successor to the throne, and it is unquestionable that a large section of the Hebrew nationality desired to perpetuate monarchical government in the family of Saul, in grateful recognition of a sovereign who, in spite of many faults, had delivered the land from anarchy, and kept its enemies at bay. Ishbosheth was not inclined to admit the claims of David. At the head of a large army, and with the assistance of Abner, he seems to have maintained himself for some years, and even to have made his power felt on the western side of the Jordan, where the Philistines were in great force. But a civil war was at the same time proceeding between the adherents of Ishbosheth and those of David; and on a certain occasion, when the two armies were confronting each other at the pool of Gibeon, an accidental encounter brought on a general engagement, in which Abner was worsted. From that day forth, the fortunes of Ishbosheth declined; and after the desertion of Abner, who went over to David in consequence of a quarrel he had had with his former master, the cause of Saul's posterity was lost. Abner was subsequently assassinated by one of David's captains, who had a blood-feud with him; and Ishbosheth himself was murdered by two chieftains of his own army, who carried his head to David at Hebron. For this act of treachery, David caused them to be executed. The removal of Ishbosheth enabled his rival to extend his own power from the small territory of Judah, which was all he had previously governed, to the whole domain of Israel.

On the death of Ishbosheth, it became evident that the interest and safety of the Hebrew race required the consolidation of the country under the sway of David. Notwithstanding the roving character of that prince's life during the latter years of Saul's reign, he had many followers, and the Israelites generally could not but recollect that in former times he had been one of the bravest and most successful of the national champions against the Philistines. The people accordingly met in session at Hebron, in 1048 B.C., and made David sovereign over all Israel—a position for which his courage and genius designated him, and which events had helped him to obtain. There cannot be a doubt that this was a really popular election. The several tribes took the matter into their own hands, and the ceremony was completed by the act of the Elders (a secular body) in anointing the new monarch. "King David," we are told, "made a league with them in Hebron before the Lord."* David was chosen by the majority of the Jewish people; yet we must not suppose that there were no dissentients. The tribe of Benjamin—Saul's tribe—regarded the new king with detestation, as a bloody and faithless man; and this feeling may have been shared by some others. But, on the whole, the son of Jesse was considered the most likely person to ensure the well-being of the land. He ascended the throne under favourable circumstances, and it certainly cannot be said that his reign belied its early promise.

David was now the acknowledged chief of a very large and powerful army. The command of this host was given to the king's nephew, Joab, who had assassinated Abner, and David himself devoted his principal attention to affairs of state. One of the first acts of his reign was to wrest from the hands of the Jebusites a fortified city in the very heart of the national territory, which until then had escaped capture by the Israelites—a city destined to be the capital of the Hebrew possessions, and to become, in some respects, the most conspicuous place in the world. This was Jerusalem, which, situated in the midst of sterile and savage mountains, had preserved its independence when the surrounding country submitted to the Jewish strangers. It had, indeed, been attacked before; for, as already related, the men of Judah laid siege to this stronghold in the early times of the Judges, and even succeeded in taking the lower town, though they afterwards recoiled from the citadel, which stood on a commanding eminence. The Jebusites accordingly held the city until it was assailed by David in 1048 B.C. The enterprise was by no means an easy one. It required, according to the account in the First Book of Chronicles, an army of many thousand picked warriors, provided with the most effective weapons of that age, to effect the reduction of the place. Nothing could exceed the resolution with which the Jebusites resisted their enemies; but the citadel was at length taken, and David proceeded to secure his acquisition by surrounding the whole city with a wall. The name of the place had previously been Jebus, after the tribe which dwelt there. It was now called the City of David, and ultimately Jerusalem. Many commentators believe it to be identical with the more ancient Salem, and derive

* II. Samuel, v. 3.

its name from a combination of that word, signifying *peace*, with a corrupted form of Jebus. After this event, the king appears to have assumed some of the pomp and ceremonial of an Eastern sovereign; and the fame of his prowess became so widely known that Hiram, King of Tyre, sent a complimentary embassy to the Jewish monarch, accompanied by carpenters and masons, who built for David a palace of cedar-wood.

The main objects of the new king, apart from religion, were to establish his power, and to promote the greatness of the nation. He levied a tribute from the subject races, and in this way formed a treasury, which was placed under the direction of a competent officer. Overseers were appointed for the royal gardens, oliveyards, vineyards, and sycamore plantations. The king also had property in herds and flocks, and it is probable that he desired to render himself independent of popular support, which might be capricious. On the army he felt he could rely. His body-guard consisted of a number of men who are thought to have been foreign mercenaries, though the commander was a pure Israelite. The rest of the military force was composed of the warriors (Jewish or alien) who had allied themselves with David in the days of the persecution by Saul, and of others who were added after the complete assumption of power at Hebron. The hosts of Israel had previously been but slightly disciplined: they were now organised in an elaborate fashion, and the use of war-chariots was introduced from Syria. That the king might know the exact strength on which he could rely in time of war, he commanded Joab and his subordidates to set down in writing all the martial men of the country, from Dan to Beersheba. The task spread over nine months and twenty days; and, the muster having been completed, captains were set over hundreds and over thousands, while the whole number was divided into twelve bodies, each of which consisted of 24,000 men. This gives a total of 288,000—a number which seems so much out of proportion to the small population of the land, that some error or exaggeration is to be suspected. Each of these twelve divisions was required to render service for only one month in each year; so that the army had still somewhat the character of a militia.

The time at which David effected this organisation of his forces does not very distinctly appear; but it would seem reasonable to suppose that it was before those great military operations, subsequent to the taking of Jerusalem, by which the new reign was distinguished, though the account

THE MEN OF JABESH MOURNING OVER THE GRAVE OF SAUL AND JONATHAN.

in the Second Book of Samuel (chapter xxiv.) suggests the contrary. In this way, David accomplished even more than Saul. He subdued the Philistines on the west, the Moabites and Ammonites on the east, the Assyrians as far north as the Euphrates, and the Edomites on the south. In the prosecution of these wars, David committed or sanctioned many acts of cruelty, which sufficiently prove the remorseless spirit in which the struggle was carried on by both sides. The slaughter of captives was carried on with merciless severity, other neighbouring communities were humbled, and forced to pay tribute; and from the Syrian campaign David brought home a trophy of one hundred war-horses, copper vessels from the captured cities, and a number of golden shields which the great men of the opposing force had carried. From the King of the Ammonites the Jewish sovereign took a crown of gold set with precious stones; and other articles of value were added to the treasury of David as the result of his successful wars. Until this time, the Hebrews

MOUNT ZION.

and the nature of the deaths inflicted was often horrible. The prisoners were deliberately placed under iron harrows, divided through the middle with saws and axes, or burnt alive in kilns. It is clear that the Israelites had lost none of their hatred of alien races during their long residence among the Egyptians, who were conspicuous for the merciful spirit in which they treated their vanquished foes. Such acts as those of David may have ultimately stricken terror into the opposing tribes and nations; but their first effect must have intensified resistance. Nevertheless, the arms of David prevailed. He became the most powerful monarch in that part of Asia. The strength of the Philistines was broken; the Amalekites were almost exterminated; the had been a rather primitive race; but contact with more civilised nations introduced something like a taste for the arts, and for the pomp of regality.

The development of the Israelitish power under Saul and David, but especially under the latter, was very remarkable. That which during the Theocracy had been an anarchical collection of weak and turbulent communities, unable to resist attack from without, unable even to maintain the purity of the faith within, had become a puissant Monarchy, extending from the borders of Egypt to Damascus. The Philistines, though defeated in Israel, still preserved their ancient borders, which David did not attempt to disturb; but otherwise the supremacy of the Hebrew ruler was undisputed,

The liberties of the people were not seriously curtailed—at any rate, in the earlier portions of the reign; and it is remarkable that under the sway of David we do not hear of those general defections to idolatry which were so frequent under the government of the Judges. David was devoted to religion; but he did not forget that he was also a secular sovereign, and that as a secular sovereign it was his business to pay some regard to temporal affairs. He organised, not only the army, but the political and social state. As in the time of Saul, the king was the supreme judge; and, in the last resort, David discharged the duties of that office. But he rightly perceived that, except in a few special instances, the judicial power cannot be exercised by the head of a community which has passed out of the tribal into the national stage of existence. He therefore created local judges for the several parts of the land; and from the decisions of these functionaries there was an appeal to himself. He likewise appointed officers of the royal household and treasury, a chancellor, a scribe, and an overseer of taxes.

The religious enthusiasm of David is seen in his conduct with respect to the Ark of the Covenant—the chest of acacia-wood which contained the tables of the law. Since the restoration of the ark by the Philistines, it had been kept at Kirjath-jearim, in the custody of a family which was probably of Levitical origin. Several years had elapsed, and David thought he could not perform a more acceptable service than to remove this sacred object to his new capital, Jerusalem. He therefore went to Kirjath-jearim to superintend its transport; but the contemplated design was delayed by an accident. After remaining at the house of a certain Gittite for three months, the ark was again moved forward on its waggon drawn by oxen, and at length arrived at the city of David. Its progress was attended by solemn manifestations of the popular joy—by singing and playing on various instruments, by shouting and dancing; in all of which exercises David distinguished himself to an extent that appeared unseemly in the eyes of his wife, Michal, the daughter of Saul. Her reproaches led to an estrangement which lasted to the end of their lives; but David had already adopted, on an extensive scale, the polygamous habits of Eastern sovereigns, and there were circumstances in the life of Michal which make it likely that she had entirely lost her former affection for the king. The arrival of the ark in Jerusalem was followed by sacrifices and festivals, and the consecrated chest was deposited in a tabernacle which David had pitched for it on Zion, one of the steep hills of Jerusalem. The date of this removal is said to have been about 1042 B.C. It was before the principal military successes of the king.

Having settled the Tabernacle within the walls of his new capital—which was thenceforward to be considered the pre-eminently holy city of Israel—David took care to provide for its proper service. The high-priest Abiathar, a member of the house of Eli, and a descendant of Aaron through his son Ithamar, was placed in charge of the sacred tent, in which office he was assisted by Zadok, of the house of Eleazar, another of the posterity of Aaron. The duties of the latter were more generally discharged at Gibeon; but Zadok and Abiathar were of nearly equal dignity, and sometimes divided the priestly duties at Jerusalem itself. David afterwards enriched the Tabernacle with the spoil of his victories, but was dissuaded from the purpose of building a costly temple in its place—a project which was not realised until the reign of his son and successor. Jerusalem was now the religious as well as the political metropolis of Israel, and David showed great zeal in all that belonged to the national worship. Besides the two high-priests, Abiathar and Zadok, he frequently consulted the prophets Gad and Nathan; moreover, there were two classes of subordinate religious functionaries, some of whom were instructed in singing and music, while others were charged with the guardianship of the sanctuary. The king himself was a religious poet of great genius, and his compositions of this nature must have given a powerful stimulus to the devotional sentiment of his countrymen. The creation at Jerusalem of a great centre of ecclesiastical life and ceremonial, and the greater splendour with which the services were probably carried out when associated with an ornate and ambitious court, helped to establish the Hebrew faith, and to counteract the tendencies of waverers. Yet the magnificence of the Jewish Monarchy was not without deep shadows and portentous memories.

Of the sincerity of the king's religious feeling there can be no doubt; but this, as frequently happens, was an insufficient guarantee of moral worth. We have seen how questionable was the conduct of David when in exile; how stern was his treatment of vanquished enemies in the days of his power and prosperity. To generous impulses he was no stranger, and he sometimes acted on them; but, in the main, he was a man at the mercy of his passions. The events arising out of his love for Bathsheba cast an ineffaceable stain upon his character. Bathsheba was the wife of Uriah the Hittite, one of the king's military

commanders. With this woman David committed adultery, and then sent a letter to his generalissimo, Joab, commanding him to set Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle (it was while Rabbah, a city of the Ammonites, was being besieged), and to desert him when in that position, so that he might be slain. This was accordingly done, and David married Bathsheba, after she had been allowed a decent interval of mourning. When the prophet Nathan came to know of this iniquity, he threatened the offender, in the name of God, with the most signal punishments, but immediately afterwards remitted them on the admission by David that he had sinned. The child of the adultery, however, was smitten with mortal sickness. Thus, a union which began with profligacy, and was cemented with murder, was suffered to remain undisturbed, and the renowned Solomon was soon born to David, as a substitute for the child that had been taken.

A period of profound affliction, however, was coming upon the king. One of his sons, named Amnon, committed a most flagitious act upon his half-sister, Tamar—an outrage which her whole-brother, Absalom, secretly determined to revenge. He dissembled this purpose for two years; then, inviting all his brothers to a sheep-shearing feast at his estate in Baal-hazor, he caused Amnon to be slain by armed men. The offence of Amnon had been great; that of Absalom was even greater, because it was at once sanguinary and treacherous. The murder having been accomplished, Absalom fled to the court of his maternal grandfather, Talmai, King of Geshur, a district of Syria to the north-east of Palestine. After an interval of three years, he was permitted by David to return. After another two years, he was once more admitted to his father's presence; but he requited this kindness by engaging in a conspiracy against the throne. For such a design, he found no want of materials on which to work. A large amount of disaffection was by this time spread throughout the country. The king was old, and had possibly relaxed the closeness of his supervision. Abuses had made their way into the system of government; the constant military levies were found to be onerous; and the lavish slaughter of Israelites in foreign wars, though adding to the glory and even the safety of the State, may have excited a feeling of discontent among those who chiefly suffered. Absalom was a remarkably handsome man, and a general favourite with the people. His elder brothers being dead, he was the rightful heir to the throne; and to every one with a grievance he gave flattering assurances of what he would do for the maintenance of justice if the supreme power were his. Surrounded by a splendid retinue, he sat in the gate of Jerusalem, paying extravagant court to the populace. In time, he gained over to his side two very important converts: Ahithophel, the most distinguished of the royal counsellors; and Amasa, the son of David's sister, Abigail. The probability of success seemed now very great, and Absalom sent word to all the tribes to proclaim him king as soon as they received intelligence that he was in Hebron.

When the signal was given, it proved that Absalom had indeed many adherents in Israel. The whole western side of the Jordan declared in his favour, and at the head of a numerous army he set out against Jerusalem in 1023 B.C. David was so conscious of his own loss of popularity, even in the very centre of his power, that he fled from the city with a number of adherents, saying, "Arise, and let us flee; for we shall not else escape from Absalom." It is difficult to account for this craven spirit in one who had been so great a hero, unless on the supposition that his mind was weakened with age, and his conscience overburdened with the memory of his crimes. As he went, a member of the family of Saul flung stones and dust at him, and cursed him for a man of blood, a son of Belial, and an usurper. The people had evidently turned against him, and David had no hope but from strategy. He therefore directed Hushai, a trusted friend of his, to return to Jerusalem, and, by a pretended adherence to Absalom, counterwork the plans of Ahithophel. Hushai did so with great skill, and, as the event proved, with great success. The advice of Ahithophel was that Absalom should at once set out in pursuit of his father, taking with him a serviceable force of 12,000 picked warriors; but Hushai persuaded him to rouse all Israel, and proceed with an innumerable host, by whom the enemy might be overwhelmed. In the meanwhile, he managed to send word to the old king to withdraw beyond the Jordan; and Ahithophel, foreboding disaster from the delay, and from the unwieldy and ill-disciplined levy, went home, set his household in order, and hanged himself.

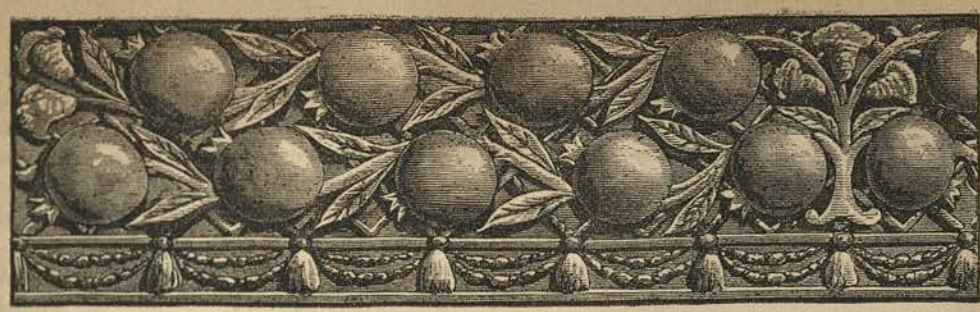
David was now encamped at Mahanaim, on the eastern side of the river. He had time to organise his forces, and support came to him from a quarter in which he could hardly have expected to find it—from the Ammonites whom in former times he had treated with such merciless ferocity. When at length attacked by Absalom, he entrusted the direction of his forces to Joab and two other commanders, while himself remaining in the back-

ground. The action was fought in the forest of Ephraim, near the Jordan, and resulted in the defeat of Absalom's rabble by the well-organised and ably-commanded legions of David. The slaughter of the insurgents was very great, and Absalom, seeing that the day was lost, fled on his mule through the depths of the forest. His long hair became entangled in the thick boughs of an oak, and Joab thrust him through with a spear three times, although David had issued strict commands that the prince, if captured, should be kindly treated. The death of Absalom gave his father the profoundest grief, but it probably hastened the suppression of the rebellion. Nevertheless, it did not lead to an immediate restoration of David's authority over the whole of Israel. The insurrection was continued for a short time by Amasa, the commander-in-chief of Absalom, and the people still showed a willingness to oppose their former sovereign. David, however, again resorted to diplomacy, and with his usual success. He contrived to set the tribes against one another, and presently found that he might recross the Jordan in safety. He was met on the western shore by Shimei, the man who had cursed him in the day of his misfortune, but who now made humble submission. The king promised that he should not die, but he was nevertheless slain in the reign of Solomon.

After awhile, a fresh insurrection broke out under Sheba, the son of Bichri, a man of the tribe of Benjamin. Sheba rapidly moved about from place to place, rousing the people; and the movement looked formidable. But the king had by this time many supporters of great power and influence. He had secured the devotion of Amasa by offering him the post of captain-general in place of Joab. It does not appear that Amasa actually supplanted Joab, but he occupied a position of equal authority, and both commanders were employed in the suppression of Sheba's revolt. Joab, however, would seem to have been jealous of his favoured colleague, and he treacherously murdered him before Gibeon. The pursuit of Sheba was then continued by Joab, and the rebel shut himself up in a city in the extreme north of Palestine, which it was found necessary to besiege. The defence was prolonged with great obstinacy; but at length the people, growing tired of resistance, cut off the head of Sheba, and threw it over the wall to Joab.

This brought the series of rebellions to an end, about 1022 B.C., and David was once more at peace. His kingdom, however, had been sadly reduced by the convulsions through which it had passed, and by a famine which long afflicted the people. The visitation of this famine is attributed to the crime committed by Saul and his family when they slew the Gibeonites. The ancestors of those bondsmen had, in the time of Joshua, obtained the protection of the Israelites by means of a stratagem. Their lives were spared, but they were condemned to the perpetual drudgery of hewing wood and drawing water for the congregation and the priesthood. In a sudden access of fanaticism, Saul and his house slew some of the unhappy outcasts, and threatened the rest with a general massacre; and this was regarded as a breach of the covenant that they should be suffered to live. When, therefore, David was told that the three years' famine was on account of Saul's crime against the Gibeonites, he sent for the injured community, and asked in what way he could make them amends. The Gibeonites replied that they would take neither silver nor gold; but they demanded that seven of the descendants of Saul should be given up to them. This was done, and they were hung or crucified, as a sacrifice, in Saul's own town of Gibeah. David afterwards gave honourable burial to the bones of these victims, and also to those of Saul and Jonathan; and the famine was stayed. Shortly afterwards, the kingdom was sorely troubled by the Philistines, and the life of David himself was endangered. Nevertheless, his forces ultimately prevailed, and Judah was again triumphant.* But the sovereign was now getting old; the glories of his earlier years had been overshadowed and tarnished; the system of polygamy, which he had done much to encourage, was bearing its usual fruit in dissensions among his children by various unions; and the difficult question of the succession to the throne involved the last days of the king in troubles and dangers which, besides threatening the security of the State itself, gave an additional bitterness to the approach of death.

* II. Samuel, xxi. 1—22.



BORDER OF POMEGRANATES.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE REIGN OF SOLOMON.

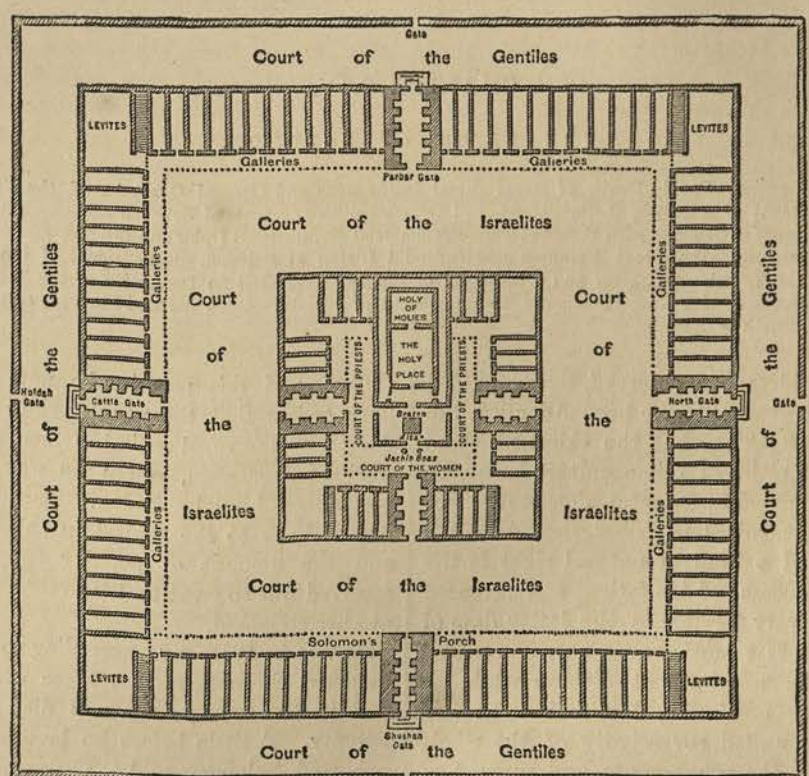
Revolt of Adonijah against David—Death of David—Final Instructions and General Character of the King—Accession of Solomon—Treatment of Adonijah, Joab, Shimei, and Others—Military Events of Solomon's Reign—Extent of the Jewish Dominions—Alliance of Solomon with Hiram of Tyre—Commercial Expeditions: Ophir and Tarshish—Immense Development of National Prosperity—The Great Buildings and Splendid Living of Solomon—Enslavement of the Canaanites—The Foundation of the Temple—Character and Description of the Building—Solemn Dedication of the Temple—Intellectual Acquirements of the Jewish King—Solomon's Encouragement of Idolatry—Good and Bad Features of the Reign—Ahijah and Jeroboam—Death of Solomon.

Had priority of birth been observed, the designated successor of David would have been Adonijah, the fourth son of the king, but the eldest of those surviving. The claim of primogeniture has never been strictly admitted in Oriental Monarchies; yet it was so far recognised in Israel that Adonijah conceived he had a kind of natural right to the throne on the decease of his father, and advanced his pretensions very forcibly in the latter days of the king's life. His mother was a woman named Haggith, and he was born at Hebron while his father was King of Judah, but before he had attained to the united sovereignty of the whole country. With the countenance and support of Joab and Abiathar, he raised a revolt, perhaps considering that David was by this time incapable of governing by reason of the infirmities of age, and that it was advisable to take some steps for ensuring the safety of the State. The movement at first was serious, for Adonijah found a large number of followers among the captains of the royal army belonging to the tribe of Judah, whom, together with all the princes his brethren, excepting Solomon, he invited to a great sacrificial feast on the boundary-line between Judah and Benjamin. On the other hand, Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah the captain of the body-guard, and several other men of influence, stood by David; and Bathsheba was naturally in favour of her own offspring, Solomon, then a youth of eighteen. It would appear that David had already sworn to Bathsheba that Solomon should succeed to the throne, and this promise he now renewed. He gave orders that the young prince should be conducted on the royal mule to Gihon, a spring to the west of Jerusalem, where he was anointed and proclaimed king by Zadok. Thence he was conducted back to the capital in solemn procession; and the amount of popular support which he received was so great that the rebellion of Adonijah at once collapsed.

It was in 1015 B.C., according to the generally accepted chronology, that these events occurred, and in the same year David died at the age of seventy. A little before he breathed his last, he exhorted Solomon to be observant of religion, as embodied in the laws and ordinances of Moses; and he then proceeded to certain personal directions with which religion can scarcely be said to have had any concern. The crimes of Joab, in having killed Abner and Amasa, were recalled, and Solomon was enjoined not to let the hoary head of this famous captain go down to the grave in peace. When we recollect the extraordinary services which Joab had rendered to David, the command that he should be slain appears very ungrateful: at any rate, if the acts referred to were deserving of death (which they may have been), the punishment should have been inflicted long before. Joab, however, had favoured the claims of Adonijah; and it is impossible not to see that that was the real offence which was to cancel so many years of devotion. Kindness was to be shown to the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite,

on account of the hospitality which their father had extended to David when he fled from Absalom; but Shimei, who had cursed the king at the same dark epoch of his life, was devoted to death, notwithstanding the promise to the contrary.

The total reign of David is stated at forty years; during seven of which he reigned over Judah only, while for the other thirty-three he had the whole of Israel for his subjects. He was buried in a grave which he had caused to be made on Mount Zion in



GROUND-PLAN OF THE TEMPLE OF SOLOMON.

Jerusalem; and after the return of the Hebrews from the Babylonish captivity, the sepulchre was still pointed out. It had then been for many years the general mausoleum of the Jewish kings, and was regarded by the people with peculiar veneration. This feeling was honourable to the race; for, whatever the faults of David as a man, he had undoubtedly been great as a monarch. Completing the work of Saul, he had consolidated the Monarchy, which a weaker statesman might have brought to ruin; had welded the antagonistic tribes into a powerful nation; and had remedied many of the evils which sacerdotal misgovernment had brought upon the country. Idolatry was checked, and a new and splendid life imparted to the national religion, of which there can be no question that David was a zealous son. In favour of his moral character, however, little can be said.

Solomon began his reign with an act of bloodshed of a peculiarly shocking character, and one for which there appears to be no adequate excuse. When Adonijah abandoned his rebellion, he begged mercy of his brother, who replied that as long as he continued to show himself a worthy and faithful man he should not be injured in a hair of his head, but that if wickedness should be found in him he should die. Very shortly after the death of David, Adonijah asked permission of the king to marry one of his father's concubines—Abishag the Shunammite: a sufficiently repulsive request, but one which, thus openly made, and that through the agency of Solomon's own mother, Bathsheba, could hardly have covered any treasonable design. Solomon, however, appears to have thought that it indicated an intention on the part of his half-brother to lay claim to the throne once more, and he swore that Adonijah should be put to death that day. Oaths of such a nature are but seldom broken by despotic rulers, and the unhappy prince

was accordingly slain by Benaiah. This act of ferocity was soon followed by another, not, indeed, so bad, but with elements of cruelty which are extremely painful to contemplate. Joab, perceiving that his life was in danger from the new king, fled into the Tabernacle, and threw himself before the altar. Benaiah, who, as captain of the body-guard, had the office of executioner, was sent after him. "Come forth!" he said. "Nay," replied Joab, "I will die here." Benaiah went back to the king for further instructions, and was told to slay him in the sanctuary. He was therefore killed before the altar, and buried in his own house in the wilderness. Joab was undoubtedly an assassin; but his services had been accepted, and his crimes condoned.

The treatment of Shimei was characterised by a degree of hesitation which it is not easy to explain. Although the directions of David were absolute, and without any qualification whatever, Solomon sent for the offending Benjamite, and gave him permission to dwell in Jerusalem, on condition that he did not stir forth from it. If he went out, and passed over the brook Kidron, lying between the city and the Mount of Olives, he should surely die. In this manner, and under these restrictions, Shimei lived three years; at the end of which time, two of his servants ran away into the neighbouring kingdom of Gath, one of the small Philistine sovereignties. Shimei went after them; but, on his return to Jerusalem, the fact of his temporary absence was reported to Solomon, who thereupon inflicted the penalty of death. The life of the priest Abiathar, who had given offence by his support of Adonijah, was spared, principally because he had borne the Ark of the Covenant before David; but he was deprived of his priestly office, which was conferred on Zadok. Benaiah was made chief commander of the army, in place of Joab; and Solomon now felt secure upon the throne which his father's dotage had bequeathed to him, and which his own questionable policy had established against all rivals. Yet he was not free from external assaults. The Edomites, though treated with extreme severity by David and Joab several years before, were still capable of giving trouble. Hadad, the son of the late king, had been taken to Egypt when a child, and brought up there. On hearing of the death of David and Joab, he returned to his own country, and maintained a predatory warfare during the whole reign of Solomon. Another formidable enemy was found in Rezon, a captain or subject of Hadad-Ezer, who had ruled in the small Syrian kingdom of Zobah, and who also had been defeated by David with great loss. Rezon gathered about him a band of freebooters, took possession of Damascus, and acquired an ascendency in Syria. On the whole, however, the large and disciplined armies of Solomon were able to keep these dangerous adversaries in check.

The son of David formed a matrimonial alliance with Egypt by espousing a daughter of the reigning Pharaoh, who is thought to have been the last, or at any rate a late, king of the Twenty-first (Tanite) Dynasty. This gave him the support of the great African monarchy—a support which was at the same time withdrawn from the Edomites. The latter were defeated by Solomon, and the King of Egypt, acting as his ally, took Gezer, an ancient city of the Canaanites, burnt it, and gave the territory as a present to his daughter, Solomon's wife. The Hebrew sovereign was for the most part fortunate in his undertakings. He is said to have conquered Hamath, a kingdom north of Damascus; and he also took possession of the oasis in the Syrian Desert to the north-east of the same city, where he built Tadmor, afterwards called Palmyra—names which signify "the City of Palms." This gave him a caravan-route to the Euphrates; and his dominions seem to have extended from the borders of the Red Sea to the vicinity of that stream. After the subjection of the Edomites, Solomon had command of the ports of Elath and Ezion-Geber, at the head of the Ælanitic Gulf; and his alliance with Hiram, King of Tyre—a connection perpetuated from the days of his father—gave him considerable influence over the harbours of Phœnicia.

The united navies of Solomon and Hiram carried on an extensive commerce with several of the communities dwelling along the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean. At the expense of Solomon, Phœnician shipbuilders constructed vessels, which, manned chiefly by the subjects of Hiram, sailed down the Ælanitic Gulf of the Red Sea, explored the unknown waters to the south of Arabia and of the Indian peninsula, and touched on shores which were almost as unknown to the men of Western Asia in those days as America was to Europeans in the days of Columbus. That these merchants reached India in the one direction, and the eastern parts of Africa, beyond Egypt, in the other, seems to be generally allowed. That they went still farther is possible, but dependent rather on conjecture than on any certain knowledge. The first of Solomon's expeditions returned after an absence of three years, bringing back large quantities of gold, silver, ivory, sandal-wood, precious stones, apes, and peacocks, to the value in English money (as some have supposed) of about three millions.

Several of these commodities, especially the gold and jewels, were derived from a seaport or region called in the Bible Ophir, but of which the precise locality has never been ascertained. Sir Walter Raleigh, whose very speculations had in them the spirit of adventure and of distant enterprise, thought that Ophir was one of the Molucca Islands;* in which case, the fleet of Solomon must have gone nearly as far as Australia—a very improbable circumstance. Arias Montanus, a Spanish Biblical scholar of the sixteenth century, maintained that Ophir was Peru—an opinion still more unlikely, though one which has been adopted by other writers as well. Josephus conceived that the Malay Peninsula (called in his time the Golden Chersonesus) was the place intended; while some have found Ophir in the African continent, and some in the Arabian peninsula. The point is one incapable of proof, and fortunately it is more curious than important. An equal degree of obscurity surrounds the geographical position of Tarshish, from which some of the treasures of Solomon were fetched. It is generally held to have been a city and emporium of the Phœnicians in the south of Spain, afterwards called Tartessus, and by some identified with Cadiz,—by others, with Carteïa, an ancient city (now destroyed) situated four or five miles west of Calpe, or Gibraltar; but this is by no means certain. At any rate, it is probable that the expression, "ships of Tarshish," is to be understood as meaning, not ships trading to Tarshish, but ships built at that port, and sailing thence to various parts of the world.

Judæa had carried on but little commercial intercourse with other nations until the time of Solomon: indeed, Moses had discouraged any such tendency, as giving opportunities for the introduction of idolatrous habits. But the close alliance and intimate friendship between Solomon and Hiram of Tyre—an alliance taking the form of a treaty of commerce—turned the thoughts of the former monarch to foreign traffic as the greatest of all sources of revenue. Tyre was at that time the chief commercial and maritime city of the world; its people were the principal explorers and discoverers. The territory of Solomon was in itself not badly situated for commerce; and the association between the two sovereigns seems to have been mutually advantageous. Hiram, as we have seen, gave his brother-monarch the use of his ports, his shipwrights, and his sailors. Solomon, on the other hand, ceded some cities to the Tyrian, though not such as gave him any satisfaction; and their commercial ventures appear to have been in common. Joppa, a town situated nominally in the portion of Dan, but actually within the bounds of Philistia, was opened by Solomon as a port. This created a new coasting trade, and Joppa was one of many channels of wealth to the Hebrew Monarchy. From Tyre, the Israelites received commodities of value, while the Phœnicians acquired in exchange the corn and oil which some parts of the Holy Land could supply in abundance. Commerce was promoted in every possible way. Resting-places for merchants, and warehouses for the temporary storing of imports, were erected on all the lines of traffic which crossed the dominions of Solomon. The Phœnicians were granted a road through the territories of Israel into Egypt; and the Jewish monarch himself commissioned merchants to purchase of the Pharaohs chariots, and horses, and linen yarn, which were paid for at a high price.

The country speedily grew rich under this system. Money became plentiful; labour was rewarded more liberally; and the value of all articles increased in an extraordinary degree. The king, of course, shared in the general prosperity. To his income, derived from the trade with Ophir and other foreign parts, as well as from the royal demesnes, he added what accrued to him from the taxation of the people; so that his revenue altogether seems to have amounted to a yearly sum equal to about five millions of our English money. He was thus enabled to maintain a large standing army, and his style of living was superb. The palace which Solomon built for himself, and the construction of which occupied thirteen years, was an edifice of grand proportions and sumptuous adornment. David had had a house on Mount Zion; the far larger palace of Solomon stood on a corresponding ridge to the west, but was connected with the other eminence by a causeway bridging the ravine. It consisted of several buildings, including houses for the servants; and the whole was surrounded by a wall. Pillars and beams of cedar, and stairs of sandal-wood, gave richness to this princely dwelling. The vast hall for the transaction of public business, which, from its cedar-pillars, was called the House of the Forest of Lebanon, seems to have been a part of the palace. It was a hundred and seventy-five feet long, half that measurement in width, and more than fifty feet high; and its folding doors, ceiling, and other parts, are described by Josephus as magnificent. Two other halls, of smaller dimensions, called porches, were also included in the royal edifice; in one of which, distinguished by

* History of the World, Part I., Book II., chapter 18, section 3.

much pomp, was placed the throne of justice. To these halls (according to Josephus) was joined a house built expressly for the queen. Still further edifices were assigned for diet and for sleep, after public matters were over; and these were all floored with boards of cedar. The same authority speaks likewise of sculptures on the walls, representing trees and plants, with the leaves wrought with such fineness and delicacy that the spectator might think they were in motion; of pictures and coloured stucco; of edifices devoted entirely to pleasure; of long cloisters; of a glorious banqueting hall, splendid with gold, and with costly appointments for the convenience of guests; of subterranean and concealed chambers; and of external groves and gardens. The whole building, he adds, was of white stone (he would appear to mean marble), and cedar-wood, and gold, and silver; and the roofs and walls were adorned with jewels set in gold, and beautified with many curious devices.*

This account is traditionary, and doubtless to some extent exaggerated, for Josephus lived in the reigns of the Roman Emperors, Nero, Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian, more than a thousand years after the time of Solomon; but the narrative in the First Book of Kings, which certainly belongs to a much earlier date, refers to objects of extreme magnificence, and to a variety of splendid works in brass, gold, and ivory. "And King Solomon," we there read, "made two hundred targets of beaten gold: six hundred shekels of gold went to one target. And he made three hundred shields of beaten gold; three pounds of gold went to one shield. Moreover, the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with the best gold."† Six steps led up to this throne, and on each of the steps were four lions, two at each end, while two other lions flanked the seat itself; so that altogether there were six-and-twenty of these leonine figures. Another palace, intended for the daughter of the King of Egypt, was built in one of the valleys at the foot of Mount Lebanon, in the midst of woody scenery of the most exquisite description. All the surroundings of the Jewish sovereign corresponded with the grandeur of his buildings. The vessels used in his palaces were of pure gold; none were of silver, for silver was held of no account in the days of Solomon. Many of these sumptuous vessels were the gifts of foreign princes, who came to visit Solomon because of his repute for wisdom, and who brought, besides, garments and armour, spices, horses, and mules. When he rode abroad, this gorgeous Oriental potentate was conveyed in a

SOLOMON'S THRONE, RESTORED.

* Josephus: Antiquities of the Jews, Book VIII., chapter 5, section 2.

† I. Kings, x. 16—18.

chariot of cedar-wood, with a flooring of gold, a canopy of purple, and pillars of silver; and Josephus says that he was escorted by a body-guard of young men, whose appearance was an important element in the regal pageant. They were specially chosen for their size and beauty. Their garments were of Tyrian purple, with the addition of resplendent armour; and dust of gold was sprinkled on their long and flowing hair, so that it glittered with the reflection of the sunbeams.

It is also recorded of Solomon that he built many cities, fortified Jerusalem, made channels for supplying his capital with water, and planted cedars in the plains of Judæa to such an extent that, although none had grown there before, they became as numerous as common sycamore-trees. His military power was very large, although there was not much occasion for its exercise. The whole Hebrew people were trained to arms, and the mechanical work of building was left to the men of Canaanitish race, who were still numerous in the land, and whom the king reduced to a state of almost hopeless bondage. Of these unhappy persons, between one and two hundred thousand, with their wives and children, were sent off to the quarries and forests of Lebanon; and their descendants appear to have formed a distinct order, the members of which were probably engaged from generation to generation in the same capacity as hewers of wood and stone. The employment of the aborigines in these labours enabled Solomon to execute his great schemes at a less expenditure of money than if he had been obliged to pay the wages of freemen. It also strengthened his forces by permitting the Hebrews themselves to give nearly exclusive attention to the practice of arms. Solomon, we are told in the Bible, had twelve thousand horsemen, forty thousand stalls of horses, and fourteen hundred chariots. Moses had prohibited the formation of a large cavalry force, for which he appears to have considered the mountainous character of the land unfitted. But Moses had also forbidden any alliance with Egypt; and Solomon contravened his directions in both respects.

The most famous work of Solomon was the Temple, which he commenced in the fourth year of his reign, and which was finished before any of his other edifices were begun. The construction of the Temple occupied seven years, and its foundation is regarded as a leading date in history. Authorities, however, differ as to the year. Archbishop Ussher gives it as 1012 B.C. (in which he is followed by Petavius); Clinton as 1013; Hales as 1027; Jackson as 1014; Poole as 1010. The first of these is the date generally accepted in this country; but in truth there is no certainty in the matter, nor are the figures appearing in the authorised version of the Bible, with respect to various points of detail in the government of Solomon, to be accepted with any confident reliance on their accuracy. The construction of a grand place of worship was regarded by the king as a duty which he inherited from his father, David. It was to be the great act of his reign. The chief ceremonials of the Jewish faith had until then been conducted in the tent, or Tabernacle, containing the Ark of the Covenant—a structure which, though not without some splendour of adornment, was essentially of a temporary character. To David in the first instance, and to Solomon in the second, it appeared but seemly that the worship of Jehovah should be performed in a far more substantial and glorious edifice. The work, however, was not undertaken in the time of David; but Solomon had no sooner established himself on the throne than he began to consider how he could realise this magnificent dream.

Materials had to some extent been collected by David, who is said to have given the plan of the edifice; but much more was required by Solomon. In particular, he wanted large quantities of cedar, which his own country could not then supply. He therefore addressed himself to Hiram, King of Tyre, requesting that he would command his subjects, the Sidonians, to hew cedar from the forests of Lebanon, that it might be employed in the construction of the Jewish fane. This was done by Hiram, whose agents brought the timber down from Lebanon to the sea, and then sent it on floats to the port of Joppa, whence it was carried up to Jerusalem. The Sidonians were at that time the most skilful of artificers, especially in working the precious metals; and their assistance was of the greatest value to Solomon. The subjects of the Hebrew king toiled side by side with the people of Sidon in felling cedar-trees on the woody slopes of Lebanon, and in hewing stone from the quarries among the mountains. As already stated, the Canaanitish populations were employed in these labours; but they probably worked under Jewish supervision. When a sufficient stock of materials had been gathered together, the work of building commenced. Moriah, the Mount of Vision—an eminence east of Jerusalem, associated in the minds of the people with the offering up of his son by Abraham, and, so recently as the time of David, with the cessation of a great plague—was selected as the site of the Temple. It was necessary, however, in the first place, to level the rugged top

of the mountain. The sides towards the east and south, which were precipitous, were faced with a wall of stone, built up from the valley, and constructed with immense solidity, the stones being strongly mortised together, and wedged into the rock. The area of the building formed an irregular quadrangle, bounded by a wall of great height and massiveness, within which was an open court, termed the Court of the Gentiles, because persons alien to the national religion were admitted there. The inner quadrangle, called the Court of the Israelites, was more sacred. This was itself divided into two parts by a wall which separated the place of the priests from that of the laity; and over a portico or cloister belonging to the inner quadrangle were chambers for various religious purposes. The ascent to each court was by steps, and the interior of the building was consequently much higher than the outside. "The house, when it was in building," says the First Book of Kings (vi. 7), "was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was in building:" a very striking circumstance, full of a strange mystery and awe.

The dimensions of the Temple were in all respects exactly double those of the Tabernacle; but even this did not confer on Solomon's edifice any extraordinary size. In comparison with the religious fanes of the Egyptians, and indeed many other celebrated structures, it may even be considered small. The design appears to have been the same as that which had already been carried out in the Tabernacle, but which was now embodied in more permanent and sumptuous materials. Several attempts have been made to explain this design with exactness, and to reproduce, so to speak, both the ground-plan and the elevation of Solomon's Temple as if it were a structure still existing. It seems probable that Josephus, in his description of the building, combined the several features of three successive temples—those of Solomon, Zerubbabel, and Herod. As regards the earliest of these, the principal sources of information are to be found in the First Book of Kings and the Second Book of Chronicles; but a distinguished modern authority has declared that the details as there set forth are not only unscientific, but contradictory.* To seek for mathematical precision where no such result is possible, is waste of time and ingenuity. Let it be confessed that we can form only a very general idea of the great architectural triumph of King Solomon.

* Dean Milman's History of the Jews, Book VII.

The plan of the edifice, like that of the Tabernacle which it followed, was similar to the plan of the Egyptian temples; and in certain respects its measurements seem to have corresponded with those of some of the oldest fanes in Upper Egypt. Its chief subdivisions were the Porch, the Holy Place, and the Holy of Holies. The last-named was of course the sanctuary, which was regarded as the awful and mysterious shrine of the Divine Presence, and which was entered by the High Priest alone, and by him only once a year. The Porch was in the eastern front of the edifice, and consisted of a tower rising to a height of two hundred and ten feet; and either within the entrance, or in front of it like the Egyptian obelisks, stood two pillars of brass, called Jachin and Boaz (Durability and Strength), wrought by an artificer of the tribe of Naphtali, the son of a Tyrian father, and apparently in the service of Hiram, King of Tyre, whose name he bore. The capitals of these pillars were elaborately ornamented with net-work, chain-work, and pomegranates—the last, a favourite adornment with the Hebrews. The width of the porch was the same as that of the main body of the structure—viz., thirty-five feet; and the entire length of the Temple was a hundred and five feet, of which only thirty-five belonged to the Holy of Holies. The height of the building was fifty-two feet and a half. Along the sides were aisles, divided into three storeys of small chambers; and the interior of the edifice was lighted by windows which, narrow externally, widened inwards, as we see in Gothic churches. Indeed, it has been observed by more than one writer that the Temple of Solomon, with its tower at the east end, its chancel, and its aisles, must have borne a certain resemblance to the religious edifices of Christian Europe, though, as we have said, the plan was mainly Egyptian.

The most striking feature of the Temple, in a physical sense, was its extraordinary splendour. The walls were faced within with cedar, richly carved; the ceiling was of fir-wood; but every part was overlaid with gold, even to the very floor. In the sanctuary were two figures of cherubim, made of olive-wood covered with the finest gold, each ten cubits high, with outstretched wings spreading from wall to wall, and meeting in the centre. A magnificent veil, of blue, and purple, and crimson, and fine linen, with cherubim worked upon it, divided the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place, and this was suspended from golden chains. Cherubim, and palm-trees, and open flowers, blazing with gold, were to be seen in all parts of the building; the altar, the table of shew-bread,

the lamps, the ten candlesticks, the hundred basins, and the various sacrificial vessels, were fashioned out of the solid metal; and in many places the walls were garnished with precious stones. Equally magnificent were the works in brass, executed by Hiram, of the tribe of Naphtali. These, in addition to the pillars at the entrance, consisted of a great cistern supported on twelve oxen (three turned each way), a large altar, and ten capacious lavers for purposes of ablution, standing on wheels, and, like the cistern, ornamented with many graven figures.

When the Temple was finished, it was solemnly dedicated to Jehovah, with ceremonies of the most splendid and impressive character. It is recorded that the whole tribe of Levi attended; though, as the body numbered 38,000, it is difficult to understand how they could all have been present, in addition to many more, within the walls of a building not very remarkable for size. The chieftains of the other tribes were likewise there, together with the elders of Israel, and divers persons of distinction. The account in the First Book of Kings, and that in the Second Book of Chronicles, assert, indeed, that "all the men of Israel" were assembled; but the expression cannot be taken literally. Solomon was seated on a raised throne of brass, and around him were the priests, the sacrificers, and the musicians with their trumpets, cymbals, harps, and psalteries. The festival extended over fourteen days, and 22,000 oxen, with 120,000 sheep, are said to have been sacrificed by Solomon on the first day alone. The total number of burnt offerings was so great that they could not be counted. The removal of the Ark of the Covenant from Zion, and of the Tabernacle from Gibeon, and their conveyance into the Temple, were accompanied by observances of the most impressive description. According to the Biblical chronology of Archbishop Ussher, the Temple was completed in 1005, and dedicated to Jehovah in 1004 B.C.

The wisdom of Solomon is proverbial. While still quite a young man, newly come to the throne, he besought the gift of wisdom above all other gifts, and as a poet and moralist he has left evidence of signal abilities. The Queen of Sheba (an Arabian princess) was one of many monarchs who visited the Hebrew sovereign on account of his high repute for knowledge and discernment. Solomon is described as having a special aptitude for solving enigmatical questions, and the Phœnician writers quoted by Josephus state that he and Hiram, King of Tyre, delighted to puzzle one another with difficult problems, staking large sums of money on the result.* The proverbs of Solomon are stated in the Book of Kings to have been three thousand in number, his songs a thousand and five; and he wrote of trees and herbs, of beasts and fowls, of creeping things and fishes. Of his literary productions, however, nothing remains but the well-known Song of Solomon, the Book of Proverbs, the Book of Ecclesiastes, and possibly some of the Psalms; and the authorship even of these has been doubted in recent times. A vast amount of legend has gathered about the name

JOPPA.

* Antiquities of the Jews, Book VIII., chapter 5, section 3.

BRINGING CEDAR FROM LEBANON.

of the Jewish potentate. In the estimation of the Arabians, the Persians, and other races which have accepted the Mohammedan faith, Solomon was a great enchanter, endowed with dominion over the world of spirits,—the conqueror of the rebellious Afreets and Jinns, whom he cast into the sea,—the possessor of a magic ring, which revealed to him the past, the present, and the future. Tadmor in the Wilderness (Palmyra) was represented by some of these traditions as having been built by the Jinns at Solomon's command; and at Shiraz, in Persia, they show the tomb of Bathsheba. In Europe, books of magic and of incantations have been attributed to this monarch.

Yet, in spite of all his knowledge and penetration, Solomon had not the wisdom to control his passions, or to live by the severe rules of justice and purity. He was a despot, whose hand pressed heavily on the subject tribes. His splendour passed into ostentation, his love of pleasure into criminal voluptuousness. It is said that he kept a seraglio of a thousand women, and among these were many of foreign birth, who turned the heart of the king to idolatry. Thus it happened that he who had built the magnificent Temple to Jehovah, and dedicated it in a prayer of great sublimity, paid some degree of honour, in his later days, to Ashtoreth (Astarte), the goddess of the Sidonians, to Moloch, or Milcom, the deity of the Ammonites, to Chemosh, the god of Moab, and to others not specifically mentioned. What amount of recognition he bestowed upon these idols is unknown; but it was probably considerable. Had his motive been simply a desire to establish toleration (within certain limits) in a land which embraced a great variety of religions, there would have been some ground for his action, and the civilised world at the present day would regard him as a man in advance of his time. But he seems to have done more than this. He appears to have given direct countenance to the several forms of alien worship. His heart, it is stated in the First Book of Kings, was turned away after other gods, and he built fanes or altars to Chemosh, Moloch, and the rest, on the hill before Jerusalem—within view, therefore, of the Temple itself. When it is considered that the rites of many of these religions (if not of all) were abominable and cruel beyond measure—were, in fact, such as we should not tolerate in India at the present day—it is impossible to place the conduct of Solomon on any worthy footing.

The political system of the Jewish king was that of a despotism, and it had all the faults of such modes of government. Nevertheless, we must not permit ourselves to be drawn into a depreciation of whatever was excellent in its results. The Monarchy established by Saul, confirmed by David, and made illustrous by Solomon, had placed the country in a much more favourable position than it ever enjoyed under the Judges. Internal peace was assured; and of external war there was but little in the reign with which we are here concerned. Religion itself, until the partial defection of the king towards the latter end of his life, was observed with greater pomp and ceremony than in the days of a government professedly sacerdotal. Israel, which had formerly been scorned, even where it had not been injured, was now universally respected; and the prosperity of the people was for many years remarkable. "Judah and Israel," says the author of the First Book of Kings (iv. 20—25), "were many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking, and making merry. . . . And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig-tree, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon." These passages indicate a very high degree of comfort and happiness.

The prosperity of the land, however, was to some extent factitious. It resulted not merely from commerce, the only genuine source of national wealth, but from a sudden influx of the precious metals, which rather led to extravagance than tended to the production of any solid and lasting good. Besides the large importations of gold from Ophir and Tarshish, the kings and princes of the subject-provinces paid tribute, in money and in kind, at a fixed annual rate. Some of the conquered lands were extremely rich, possessing armour and ornaments of gold and silver, idols of immense value, and treasures stored up in the temples; and these were in several instances appropriated by Solomon. The result was that an enormous amount of money was circulated among the people, and for a time every one appeared to benefit by the affluence of the State. But the prodigality of the king was productive of evils from which the commonalty suffered. Monopolies of trade were established, to enhance the revenue at the cost of the nation. The provinces, each in turn, supplied the king's household with provisions; and as the royal establishment was enormous, the tax was extremely heavy. The cost of the great edifices which were erected with so much ostentation was another serious charge upon all classes; provender was required for 40,000 horses and a great number of dromedaries; and ultimately it was found necessary to add direct to indirect imposts. It is impossible at this distance of time to fix the

amount of treasure which Solomon amassed. Dr. Prideaux estimated that, at his death, David left to his successor a sum amounting to no less than eight hundred millions sterling, which is nearly equal to the capital of the national debt of England; but this is incredible. Still, it cannot be questioned that Solomon began his reign with the possession of great riches, and that to these he added very largely by the fortunate ventures of his earlier years. The extravagance of an Eastern despot, however, will exhaust any degree of affluence which may come into his hands. Such was the case with Solomon, and, as in all these matters, the people were compelled to suffer for the fault of their master. During many years of this brilliant reign, the Israelites were called upon for nothing but military service, all the taxes being laid on strangers—an unjust arrangement, but one calculated to ensure popularity. Later on, the system was changed, less from fairness than necessity.* The people began to murmur, and Solomon's popularity waned with his declining years.

It is impossible to fix with certainty the dates of those few events which break with anything like dramatic interest the splendid pageantry of Solomon's reign. In the eleventh chapter of the First Book of Kings (verse 14), it is stated that the opposition of Hadad the Edomite, to which allusion has already been made, was stirred up by Jehovah, as a penalty, it would seem, for the king's encouragement of idolatry. But, inasmuch as it is also stated, a little farther down (verse 21), that Hadad left Egypt and invaded Judæa as soon as he heard of the death of David, the trouble from this source must have commenced early in the reign of Solomon. The enmity of Rezon, the son of Eliadah, is attributed to the same cause; but it is immediately afterwards affirmed that Rezon was "an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon;" so that the affliction cannot have been due in the first instance to an act which did not occur until near the end of the king's life. In the latter part of Solomon's reign, however, an enemy, or at least a presumed enemy, arose in Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, an Ephraimite, and a person employed in important offices of state. To this man, the prophet Ahijah promised the kingship over ten tribes, as soon as Solomon should be dead; on which account Solomon sought to assassinate him. Jeroboam, however, could not have caused any prolonged uneasiness to the king; for, perceiving that his life was threatened, he speedily fled into Egypt, where he lived until the death of the sovereign whom he was in some measure to supersede.

Solomon died about the year 975 B.C., according to the received chronology, and was buried in Jerusalem. His age was not more than fifty-eight (though he is described in the Bible as old); but he had reigned as long as his father—viz., forty years. Though not distinguished by any very striking vicissitudes, so far as external facts are concerned, the rule of Solomon had been weighty with moral teaching. Beginning with signal prosperity, and passing onward and upward to the zenith of splendour and magnificence, it closed amid gathering clouds, and under the shadow of impending change. Solomon had tasted the utmost sweetness of fortune: he did not live to taste its utmost bitterness; but he apprehended to the very root that inexpressible melancholy and despair which lies at the bottom of all pleasure in excess, of all indulgence that forgets the moral law, of all associations that are unsanctified by love, and all power that is unwarranted by the good it does. Dominion had been his, and honour, and success, and knowledge beyond the lore of other men; he had seen the pomp of regality as only the potentates of the East can see it; and the exaltation of religious triumph had lifted him for a season into the loftiest air that human pride or humbleness can breathe. Yet, in the latter days of his life (if the Book of Ecclesiastes be really his), he discovered that all was vexation of spirit, to no worthy end—that all was vanity beneath the sun which lit him to an unregarded grave.

* Milman's History of the Jews, Book VII.

CHAPTER XV.

JUDAH AND ISRAEL.

Accession of Rehoboam, and Rebellion of the Ten Tribes—Foundation of the Kingdom of Israel by Jeroboam—Character of the Two Kingdoms, Judah and Israel—Establishment of Symbolical Calf-worship by Jeroboam—Hebrew Tendencies to Idolatry—Invasion of Judah by Sheshonk, King of Egypt—Defeat of Jeroboam by Abijah, King of Judah—Suppression of Idolatry in Judah by Asa—Reign of Baasha in Israel—Alliance between Asa of Judah and Benhadad of Syria—Zimri and Omri in Israel—Brilliant Reign of Omri—Ahab and Jezebel: Israelitish Idolatry—Elijah and the Priests of Baal—Wars between Ahab of Israel and Benhadad II. of Syria—Reign of Jehoshaphat in Judah—Jehoram, King of Israel, and the Syrians—Baal-worship in Judah—Attack on Ramoth-Gilead by Jehoram and Ahaziah—Treason of Jehu, and Murder of Jezebel—Treacherous Massacres by Jehu—Athaliah and Jehoash—Victorious Career of Hazael, the Syrian—Murder of Jehoash, of Judah—Later History of Judah and Israel—Action of Assyria on the Israelitish Monarchy—Reign of Ahaz in Judah—War with Israel—Homage paid by the Jewish King to Tiglath-Pileser—Oppression of Israel—The Kingdom broken up by the Assyrians.

REHOBOAM, the son of Solomon by Naamah, an Ammonitess, succeeded to the great monarch whose fame had extended into distant lands, and under whose sceptre Israel had been a power in the world. The new king was not slow in creating unpopularity for himself, and, had he been bent on procuring his own downfall, could hardly have acted in a way better calculated to effect that end. When Rehoboam went to Shechem, for his investiture as sovereign, a deputation of the people represented to him that his father had oppressed them with many grievous burdens, and plainly made their allegiance dependent on the lightening of this heavy yoke. That he might consult his advisers, the king took three days to mature his reply. The old men of the court were in favour of conciliatory treatment; the young nobles, with all the insolence of their order, advised that the people should be threatened with still severer exactions, and with the manifold cruelties of a bloody tyranny. The latter was the course adopted, and it precipitated a revolt. All the tribes, with the exception of Judah and Benjamin, threw off their allegiance to the House of David; and when Adoniram, the chief receiver of the tribute, was sent to them, he was stoned to death. It was now evident that the insurrection was too serious to be trifled with, and Rehoboam fled with all speed to Jerusalem, where, in the midst of his adherents, he was comparatively safe.

Among those who formed the deputation to the new king, in 975 B.C., was Jeroboam, who had quitted Egypt, and returned to his own country, on hearing of the death of Solomon. He was apparently sent for by the people; indeed, it is probable that they designed to make him king in case their demands were refused, and that he was not unwilling to help in bringing about the prophecy which assigned to him regal honours. Jeroboam had from an early age exhibited marked ability When Solomon was restoring the fortifications of Millo, he saw in the young man proofs of industry and valour, which induced him to promote his well-being. The fortifications (which seem to have been included in the outworks of Jerusalem) were completed by him, and he advanced in the king's favour until there appeared some reason for suspecting that he aspired to the throne. The Pharaoh who had been on friendly terms with Solomon, and whose daughter he had married, was now dead or deposed, and Sheshonk, or Shishak, belonging to another dynasty, reigned in the country of the Nile. On seeking refuge in Egypt, Jeroboam found in Sheshonk a ruler not at all favourably disposed towards Solomon. It is very possible, judging by the subsequent course of events, that there may have been an understanding between the Egyptian monarch and his guest, to the effect that the latter was to make some attempt upon the Jewish kingdom as soon as its great sovereign had departed. The particular circumstances attending the revolt of the Ten Tribes, and the elevation of Jeroboam to the throne, are differently related; but it is unnecessary, in this place, to go beyond the main fact that, whether by previous arrangement or not, Jeroboam obtained possession of the greater portion of the kingdom which had been ruled by Solomon.

The disruption was to some extent the result of tribal jealousies. The men of Judah adhered to Rehoboam because he belonged to their division of the Hebrew race; and Benjamin, either at the moment or shortly afterwards, went with Judah because of the close association between the tribes. On the other hand, Jeroboam was an Ephraimite, and Ephraim was the leader and representative of the old feeling of opposition to the predominance

of the House of David. It was in the territory of Ephraim that the Tabernacle had stood until a comparatively recent period; but since the rise of David's power, there had been a disposition to concentrate at Jerusalem all the great objects of the national worship. This created a feeling of antagonism on the part of the northern and eastern tribes, and the Ephraimites were ready to take advantage of a sentiment which they had perhaps prompted or encouraged. The result was the formation of the two rival kingdoms of Judah and Israel, the dividing line between which ran originally along the southern boundary of Ephraim, though portions of the territory of that tribe, together with other possessions, were afterwards included in the older kingdom. The area of Israel was nearly four times that of Judah; but the latter had a much denser population in proportion to the extent of territory. To Judah also fell the dependencies of Philistia, Moab, and Edom, the last of which carried with it the possession of the ports on the Red Sea; and as the Temple, with the Ark of the Covenant, was at Jerusalem, it was there that the religious centre still remained.

Rehoboam was at first inclined to attack the rebellious provinces, and, if possible, reduce them to submission. From this, however, he was dissuaded by the prophet Shemaiah; and he contented himself with securing his own dominions by the erection or strengthening of fortresses, and by the concentration in various places of large garrisons and stores of food. The territory of Simeon, to the south of Judah, was soon included in the kingdom called after the latter tribe, and the strength of Rehoboam was now far from inconsiderable. On the other hand, Jeroboam made equal preparation for hostilities. His capital was Shechem, which he fortified, together with the town of Penuel, on the eastern side of the Jordan. A religious schism preceded the outbreak of war. It appeared to Jeroboam that his subjects would be likely ere long to return to their former allegiance, on account of the holy character attaching to Jerusalem, unless he could succeed in establishing a separate form of worship in his own dominions. He therefore set up two golden calves—one in the town of Dan, in the northern part of Palestine, the other in the sacred city of Bethel, near the frontier of the southern kingdom. In calling the attention of his people to these figures, he said, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt."

Jeroboam desired to create a new religion in opposition to the old. He had lived for some years at the Egyptian court; he had married a sister-in-law of the reigning Pharaoh; and he had been in this way accustomed to the sight of idols, and to idol-worship. It may be that he felt no objection to a form of religion which he had beheld surrounded by much external pomp; and at any rate he had the motive of policy, which with kings is usually paramount. That he might carry out his design with completeness, Jeroboam ordained a number of priests from among the lowest of the people, not of the tribe of Levi; and, as if to show contempt for the recognised sacred days of the old faith, he made a solemn feast on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, instead of the day observed at Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles. But if Jeroboam was to blame, Rehoboam was equally guilty. His Ammonitish mother, Naamah, gave an idolatrous turn to his mind, and foreign practices became every day more common, even in Jerusalem itself. While the land was thus divided between the rival forms of a religion which seems to have had little in common with what was contemplated by Moses, the southern kingdom was invaded by Sheshonk, King of Egypt, who may perhaps have been prompted to his enterprise by Jeroboam. The Egyptian troops speedily overran the small kingdom of Judah, for their numbers were great, and neither Rehoboam nor his subjects had military virtue enough to resist with any vigour. The Jewish king soon found that he must humble himself to the conqueror, and beg for peace; but Sheshonk (who is called Shishak in the Bible) did not depart until he had stripped the Temple and the palace of Solomon of the great treasures of gold and silver which they contained, though he does not appear to have inflicted any further injuries. This disaster is referred to the year 971 B.C., and the death of Rehoboam to 958.* A state of war subsisted between the kingdoms of Judah and Israel during all the days of Rehoboam, and he left to his son Abijah a somewhat precarious inheritance.

Nevertheless, Abijah resolved on attacking Jeroboam. He raised a considerable force, which encountered the army of the Israelitish king at Mount Ephraim, in 957 B.C. The preponderance of numbers was on the side of Jeroboam; but the presence of the orthodox priesthood on that of

* All these dates are very doubtful. Dean Milman observes (History of the Jews, Book VIII.) that no two writers agree as to the chronology; that the Books of Kings and Chronicles are hopelessly conflicting; and that he does not see how an exact chronology can be framed. That of Archbishop Ussher is here adopted, because it is the best known and understood.

Abijah gave confidence and animation to the hosts of the Jewish monarch. Jeroboam was defeated with heavy loss, and the city of Bethel fell into the hands of the victor. Abijah was a man of enterprise and ability; but Judæa did not long enjoy the benefit of his guidance. After a reign of three years he died, and was succeeded, in 955 B.C., by his son Asa, who took measures for checking idolatry, and for re-establishing the splendour and dignity of the national religion. The penalty of death was decreed, at a gathering of the people, against any one who should refuse to worship the deity of Israel. Asa degraded his grandmother, Maachah, from her regal position, because she had made an idol in a grove; and the figure was burnt to ashes by the brook Kidron. During the reign of this king, Judæa was invaded by a large force of Ethiopians or Egyptians; but the attack was brilliantly repelled. On the whole, the southern kingdom prospered; in the north, Jeroboam never recovered from the heavy blow inflicted on him at Mount Ephraim by the army of Abijah. After his death, in 957 B.C., his son Nadab occupied the throne for a short period, but was dethroned and put to death, in 954 B.C., by one Baasha, a man of humble birth, belonging to the tribe of Issachar. Nadab was attacked by Baasha while he was besieging the Philistine city of Gibbethon; and all his family were slaughtered, as well as himself. Baasha reigned four-and-twenty years. He invaded Judæa in 940 B.C., and began to fortify the city of Ramah, so as to intercept all who should attempt to desert from the northern to the southern kingdom; but before the works could be completed, Baasha was called off to defend his own dominions, and Asa, coming down in force, carried away the materials which had been collected at Ramah.

In this enterprise, Asa was materially helped by Benhadad, King of Syria, whom he bribed with a large sum of money to break a previous league with Baasha. The sovereigns of Damascus had for several years been growing in power. Even in the time of Solomon, the possession of that city by Rezon had to some extent separated the Jewish kingdom from its northern dependencies in the Syrian desert; and after the death of the famous monarch of Jerusalem, and the division of his realm between rival sovereigns, the prince of Damascus became a ruler of importance. His alliance was therefore extremely valuable to Asa, and the Jewish king made a great sacrifice to obtain it. The treasure which he presented to Benhadad was procured by stripping the Temple and the royal palace of its costly possessions; though how there came to be so large an accumulation so soon after the pillage of those buildings by Sheshonk is not related. The aid of the Syrian, however, was worth the price paid for it. He marched a large army into the kingdom of Israel, and attacked several of the chief cities; thus causing the diversion which drew off Baasha from his works at Ramah, and enabled Asa to carry away the building materials, which he employed in making entrenchments about Geba and Mizpeh. He died in 914 B.C., after a reign of about one-and-forty years.

Baasha, the King of Israel, reached the end of his life in 930 B.C., and was buried in the city of Tirzah, which he had made his capital. His son Elah was assassinated, when intoxicated at a banquet, by Zimri, one of his military officers. As this was in 929 B.C., he could have reigned only about a year. Zimri seized the regal power himself, and, after the fashion of usurpers in Oriental countries, slew every male of the house which he had displaced. His ferocity, however, stood him in no stead. The throne which he had thus murderously obtained he did not enjoy more than seven days. An Israelitish army was at that time encamped before Gibbethon of the Philistines; and the soldiers elected as their king the captain of the host, named Omri, who immediately beseiged Zimri in Tirzah. When the latter saw that the defences were broken down, and that he would soon be in the hands of his enemies, he retired into the palace, set fire to it, and burnt himself to death: a story very similar to that of Sardanapalus. Omri, however, did not at once become the undisputed King of Israel. He found a rival in Tibni, the son of Ginath, who was supported by half the people; but Omri gradually prevailed, and, when Tibni died, his claim was no longer questioned. His uncontested reign began in 925 B.C., and, having purchased the hill of Samaria, he built there the city of that name, which he made his capital. He ruled with vigour, and also with a considerable measure of success. From an inscription on a monument set up by Mesha, King of Moab, east of the Dead Sea, it would seem that Omri, and his son after him, held Moab in subjection forty years; that the city of Nebo was garrisoned by the Israelites; that Omri took Medabah (the region south of Nebo, towards Dibon); and that Moab was much oppressed.* On the whole, therefore, the reign of Omri was brilliant from the conqueror's point of view; but he seems to have lost some towns in the land of Gilead, which were

* Duncker's History of Antiquity, Book III., chap. 10, following Nöldeke, "Inschrift des Mesa."

REHOBOAM ACCEPTING THE ADVICE OF THE YOUNG MEN.

taken by Benhadad, the Syrian. He was on friendly terms with the kings of Tyre, and left behind him a reputation which was long preserved in the East.

In the Book of Kings it is stated that Omri was a great offender against religion; but no particulars are given. Of the misdoings of his son Ahab (who began his reign in 918 B.C.), we hear more in detail. Ahab married Jezebel, daughter of Ethbaal, King of Sidon, and the consequence of this alliance was the introduction of the Sidonian worship of Baal into Israel. The adherents of the Israelitish faith were persecuted, and several of the prophets put to death for condemning idolatry. It was an epoch of bloody and intolerant passions, and the chief instigator of the royal cruelties was doubtless Jezebel, to whom Ahab is thought to have been betrothed in the time of his father, and by his father's direction. Her argument doubtless was that she was only persecuting in self-defence.

Weak and yielding in his character, Ahab seems to have placed himself entirely in the hands of his wife, who established heathen forms of worship in the court itself. At the royal table she supported four hundred and fifty priests of Baal, and four hundred of Astarte. Altars were raised to these strange deities, and the people inclined to favour the religion of their queen. This was the epoch of the prophet Elijah, and, somewhat later, of Elisha. About 906 B.C. Elijah, aided by the populace, slaughtered all the foreign priests, or at any rate all the priests of Baal (for the record is not clear on this point), on Mount Carmel, after their failure to effect a miracle by calling down fire from heaven; and, being threatened with a similar fate himself, he fled into the desert beyond Judah, whence he afterwards issued, to reappear in Israel, and pronounce judgments against the workers of iniquity. But such was the strength of those opinions that they were not to be washed out in blood. Elijah had slain the idolatrous priests, but he had certainly not slain idolatry. Jezebel was as powerful as ever, and it cannot be doubted that she continued to support the religions to which she was attached, although the Hebrew rites were tolerated also. Her influence over the king was paramount, and it was the influence of a strong will and a remorseless heart.

Of Ahab it is related that he was a great builder, that he founded several cities, and that he made for himself an ivory palace. He adorned the city of Jezreel, in the plain of Esdraelon, with a palace and park, where he chiefly resided, though Samaria continued to be the capital of his kingdom. As a warrior, he was twice successful against Benhadad II., King of Syria. In the year 901 B.C. that potentate laid siege to Samaria, but was disgracefully routed by a sudden attack of the Israelites, led by their sovereign. He returned the next year, but with even worse fortune; for on the second occasion he was not merely defeated, but taken prisoner. Ahab, however, released him from captivity, on condition that he restored all the cities of Israel which he held, and that he admitted to Damascus certain Israelitish officers as permanent residents, with the right to possess a portion of the city for themselves and their retinues. This arrangement seems to have been similar to that which has often been adopted by the Anglo-Indian Government in the dominions of native princes. The same condition had previously been extorted by Benhadad I. from Omri; and the object was probably to foster the interests of commerce, and to keep a watch over political intrigues. The second attack on Ahab was succeeded by three years of peace; but in 897 B.C. the Israelitish monarch, in conjunction with the King of Judah, attacked Benhadad II., in order to wrest from his hands the city of Ramoth in Gilead, which he still held. The result was that the allied army was defeated, and Ahab slain.

The Jewish king who accompanied Ahab in this unfortunate expedition was Jehoshaphat, the son and successor of Asa, who died in 914 B.C. The reign of Jehoshaphat was characterised by much wisdom. Adopting a prudent rather than a startling policy, the new sovereign fortified his kingdom, kept up a powerful army, established public teachers of the law (whom he sent throughout the land, instructing the people), and effected great reforms in the judicial system of the country. Courts of judicature were appointed in all the cities of Judah, and it was decreed that judges should hold sittings from time to time. These judges received severe injunctions against exhibiting partiality and accepting bribes. The judicial establishment was under the general direction of Amariah, the Chief Priest, in all matters pertaining to religion; so that a strong feeling of a special character must have pervaded the whole body, although secular causes were judged by Zebadiah, the ruler of the house of Judah. Jehoshaphat made an unsuccessful attempt to put down the secret places in which his subjects burnt incense after an idolatrous fashion. His devotion to the orthodox faith was undoubtedly deep and earnest; yet in his alliance with Ahab he seems to have been guided by considerations of policy, as perceiving that the two branches of the Hebrew race were both threatened by the sovereign of

Damascus. For the same reason, probably, he permitted his eldest son, Jehoram, to marry Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, though here was a manifest danger of Syrian idolatries being imported into the southern kingdom. Escaping from the disastrous battle of Ramoth-Gilead, he returned to his own kingdom, where he renewed the career of prosperity which his visit to the kingdom of Israel had interrupted.

Before his alliance with Ahab, Jehoshaphat had received tribute from the Philistines and the Arabians, and this ascendency he maintained. The southern cities of Philistia were reduced, and access to the sea was thus obtained. Commerce received a fresh stimulus, and the Jewish king built at Ezion-Geber, on the Red Sea, a navy which it was intended to despatch to Ophir for gold, but which was wrecked shortly after its construction. The Edomites were reduced to actual submission, though still nominally retaining their own princes. On every side, the kingdom of Judæa was respected, and riches poured into the State, and into the coffers of the people, as they had not done since the days of Solomon. By his piety, Jehoshaphat earned the hearty support of the priesthood. On his return from the northern kingdom, he made a progress through his dominions, reclaiming the people to the worship of Jehovah; and it was then that he introduced his reforms into the judicial system of the country. In the latter part of his reign, he was threatened with invasion by a combination of the Ammonites, Moabites, and Seirites; but the design was frustrated. One of the latest circumstances of his reign, apparently, was the war which, in alliance with Jehoram, King of Israel, and with the King of Edom, he waged against the ruler of Moab, who, after the defeat of Ahab at Ramoth-Gilead, had refused to continue the payment of his annual tribute to the Israelitish sovereigns. The Moabites were defeated, and their country devastated by an incursion of the confederates. Jehoshaphat died in 889 B.C., after a reign of five-and-twenty years, to which the Hebrew chroniclers look back with a feeling of pride and admiration.

Between the reign of Ahab and that of Jehoram, the throne of Israel had been filled by Ahaziah, the eldest son of Ahab, who, after an uneventful rule of something more than a year, died in 896 B.C., in consequence of an accident. Jehoram was his brother; and when Jehoshaphat was succeeded on the throne of Judæa by his son Jehoram, both kingdoms were for a few years ruled by monarchs of the same name. Jehoram, King of Israel, was engaged in fresh hostilities with the sovereign of Damascus. In the course of this war, the city of Samaria was closely besieged by Benhadad II., who reduced the inhabitants to the utmost extremities for food. Capitulation seemed inevitable, when, owing to a sudden panic, the Syrians unexpectedly raised the siege, leaving to the Israelites a large stock of food, and an immense amount of booty. The occasion of the panic was a noise of chariots and horses which induced the besiegers to suppose that a large army of Hittites and Egyptians was coming to the relief of Samaria; and it is possible that there may really have been a movement of some other Power against the hosts of Benhadad. This was in 892 B.C., and, some years after, Benhadad, while lying dangerously ill at Damascus, was murdered by Hazael, one of his officers, who succeeded him on the throne. The reign of Jehoram, King of Judah (which lasted from 889 to 885 B.C.), was cruel and inglorious. One of the first acts of the new sovereign was to slay his brethren—a precaution against family intrigues which has at all times been usual in Oriental courts. His wife, Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, drew him over to idolatry; at any rate, it was probably due to her persuasions that the king established the worship of Baal in his dominions. Misfortunes quickly followed. Edom revolted, and the seaport of Elath, at the head of the Ælanitic Gulf, was lost to Judæa. Libnah, one of the strongest fortified cities of the realm, rebelled against its sovereign; and finally the Philistines and Arabians invaded the land, and committed dreadful havoc. The palace of the king was stormed; his wives, and all his children with one exception, were slain or carried into captivity; and the royal treasures were plundered. The monarch himself died of a terrible disease, and was succeeded by his son, Ahaziah.

Shortly after obtaining the throne of Syria, Hazael was involved in hostilities with the combined forces of Jehoram, King of Israel, and Ahaziah, King of Judah, who, in 884 B.C., were making a renewed attempt to get possession of Ramoth-Gilead. Jehoram was badly wounded in battle, and compelled to return to Jezreel, leaving the command of his army to Jehu. Soon afterwards this officer was anointed to be king over Israel by Elisha: he revolted, and, hastening by forced marches towards Jezreel, menaced Jehoram in his sickness and prostration. Being informed of the approaching danger, the wounded king sallied forth, with a courage which demands our admiration, and confronted the servant who had thus risen against him. Finding, however, that he was unable to withstand so large a host, he sought to escape, but

was shot in the back by Jehu, and died immediately after. Ahaziah, who had been to Jezreel to see Jehoram because of his illness, was present on this occasion; and he also was slain by Jehu, either then or at some other time. The conqueror soon entered Jezreel, and the news of what had happened was brought to the late king's mother, Jezebel, who still survived. With the dauntless spirit which distinguished her, and redeemed her character from what would otherwise have been simply revolting, this extraordinary woman adorned herself in all the splendours of the East, and looked out from a high window at Jehu, as he advanced in his chariot. "Had Zimri peace, who slew his master?" she asked; and the question was too pertinent and stinging to admit of a reply. "Who is on my side? who?" Jehu impetuously demanded. Two or three eunuchs appeared at the window. "Throw her down!" he cried. Jezebel was cast out, and lay weltering in her blood upon the earth. The savage warrior drove his chariot over the mangled body; and afterwards, as he sat at a feast, he was told that dogs had eaten the remains of her who once held Israel in the hollow of her hand.

Being now established on the throne of the northern kingdom, Jehu proceeded to slaughter the princes of Israel and Judah, the officers of the Israelitish court, and the priests of Astarte. The royal families of the two kingdoms were at this period united in blood by the marriage of Jehoram of Judah with Athaliah of Israel; and the wrath of Jehu fell on both alike. Jehu considered himself an instrument in the hands of Providence for extirpating idolatry from the whole territory of the Hebrews, and for destroying idolaters, whether in the highest or the lowest station. Having slain the members and adherents of the two royal houses, so far as they were in his power, Jehu determined on a much larger massacre. With the assistance of Jehonadab, an Arabian sectary, he gathered a large number of idolaters into the vast temple of Baal erected by Ahab in the city of Samaria. The pretence was that Jehu was desirous of showing unusual honour to Baal; and although the people must have been cognisant of the murder of Jehoram, and Ahaziah, and Jezebel, and their relatives—all of them more or less identified with the alien forms of worship—they believed the statement. They accordingly met in the temple; and Jehu made careful examination that not one follower of Jehovah was present. Then he offered the chief sacrifice himself, and immediately afterwards called in a guard of eighty men,—whom he had posted without, with strict orders as to their duties on that day,—and directed them to slay every man in the place. The command was faithfully and effectually carried out; the images were burned, and the temple itself was broken down and ruined.

The success of Jehu was partial and temporary. The service of idols reappeared in the kingdom of Israel, though perhaps not in the same degree; and the immediate result of the massacres in the northern monarchy was to transfer the objectionable forms of worship to the southern, where hitherto they had been less widely spread. Jehu himself tolerated the symbolical calf-worship established by Jeroboam—a species of idolatry which may, indeed, have been associated in the popular mind with the tenets of the Jewish religion, but which had a tendency to lure the people into the contemplation of darker forms. It was in Judæa, however, that the earliest effects of Jehu's onslaught were observable. The worship of Baal, violently suppressed in one division of the Hebrew land, spread with increased energy in the other. Ahaziah and all his brothers being slain, Athaliah, the mother of the late king, seized on the throne; and Athaliah, as the daughter of Jezebel, was certain to give encouragement to the followers of Baal. To secure her power, she massacred all the remaining princes of the royal house, with one exception; the priests of Baal were advanced to high places; and the followers of Jehovah, though not slaughtered, or perhaps even greatly persecuted, were certainly discountenanced.

The one son of Ahaziah whom the queen did not murder, though she intended to do so, was an infant named Jehoash, who was saved by the princess Jehosheba, sister of the late king, and wife of the High Priest. The child was brought up secretly in the Temple, and, in the seventh year of the reign of Athaliah (878 B.C.), a conspiracy against that sovereign broke out amongst the priests and Levites. The name of the High Priest at that time was Jehoiada, and he was the leader of the plot. Having gained over some of the chief military officers, he introduced them to the precincts of the Temple, obtained from them an oath of allegiance to the young monarch, and armed them with certain spears and shields which were hanging there, and which were popularly associated with the name of King David. Athaliah knew nothing of these proceedings until she heard the noise of the people shouting, and the clangour of the trumpets; when, proceeding to the Temple, she found the whole assembly saluting the newly-made monarch. She exclaimed, "Treason, treason!" and the guards took her out, and slew her near the entrance to the royal palace. Jehoash

being only seven years of age, Jehoiada assumed the direction of affairs, and, probably by his command, the priest of Baal was slain in his temple, and the idolatrous religion suppressed. As long as Jehoiada lived—and this was for three-and-twenty years after the revolution which he effected—Jehoash followed the national religion with great zeal. The Temple was restored, its services were reorganised, and attention was paid to all matters of devotion. But, after the death of Jehoiada, the king is said to have permitted the worship of Baal and Astarte, and to have stoned to death, in the court of the Temple, the priest Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, who had ventured to rebuke him for his misdeeds.

A signal reverse fell shortly afterwards on the apostate king. Hazael, the sovereign of Damascus, had for some time been pursuing a career of conquest. It is evident from the Assyrian inscriptions that, about this period, the Assyrians on the one side, and the Syrians, Hittites, Hamathites, and Phœnicians on the other, were waging an extensive and sanguinary war, and it would seem that Hazael acquired great power, and exhibited the qualities of an effective general. The Israelites in particular felt the weight of his hand. In the latter years of the reign of Jehu, he snatched from the rule of that monarch several of his best provinces; and during the reign of Jehoahaz, the feeble successor to Jehu, Samaria was reduced to a condition of dependence on Damascus. Judæa was next assailed, and Hazael, having taken Gath, proceeded to threaten Jerusalem, which he was about to attack when Jehoash bribed him to retire. The treasures of the Temple, in addition to the king's own possessions, were given up to the marauder; but the king escaped one danger only to invite a worse. Although not more than forty-seven years of age, he was in feeble health, the result, as some suppose, of a wound received in battle, though Jehoash was certainly not warlike. While lying in a helpless condition, two of his servants conspired against his life, and murdered him in his bed in the fortress of Millo, 839 B.C. It is stated in the Second Book of Chronicles that this was done in revenge for the killing of Zechariah; but, as it did not follow immediately on that act, nor until after the plundering of the Temple, it would seem to have been due partly to the latter as well as to the former event.

Amaziah, who succeeded Jehoash, put the murderers of his father to death, and established his power without dispute. He was a warlike prince, and effected some important conquests in Edom. Jehoahaz had now been succeeded on the throne of Israel by Jehoash, whose reign began two or three years before his namesake of Judah met with his untimely death. Jehoash of Israel was a man of soldierly qualities equal to those of Amaziah. He recovered a good deal of his ancestral territory from the Syrians after the death of Hazael, and, during a subsequent war with Judah, in 826 B.C., prevailed to the extent of entering Jerusalem, and carrying away the treasures of the Temple to Samaria. Amaziah was taken prisoner, and the walls of his capital were broken down throughout a considerable portion of their compass. The Israelitish sovereign appears to have died the following year; and fifteen years later—viz., in 810 B.C.—Amaziah was slain at Lachish, whither he had fled to avoid a conspiracy within the walls of his palace. His son Azariah, or Uzziah, succeeded him on the throne, and reigned prosperously for fifty-two years, during which he conquered the Philistines and Arabians, recovered Elath (the port of the Red Sea), and perhaps extorted homage from the Ammonites. Jerusalem was strongly fortified by this prince, who provided in several ways for the well-being of his country. In his latter years he was afflicted with leprosy; which the Book of Chronicles attributes to his venturing to burn incense on the altar of Jehovah (an invasion of priestly rights), but which the Book of Kings implies was the consequence of his tolerating the kind of worship that was conducted on the "high places," or mountain-tops.* He therefore retired into seclusion, and associated his son Jotham with himself in the sovereignty. Uzziah died about 758 B.C.

After the death of Jehoash, the throne of Israel (which was now frequently called Ephraim, because this had become one of the principal tribes and territories of the land) was filled by Jeroboam II., who extended his kingdom in the north so far as to include several of its ancient possessions. The trans-Jordanic provinces—those on the east side of the river—were recovered by this successful warrior; Ammon and Moab were reduced, thus giving to the King of Israel a position to the east, as well as to the north, of Judah; and Damascus was taken from the Syrians. Throughout a reign of forty-one years, the second Jeroboam maintained his power and his military predominance; but a large amount of moral corruption appears to have existed among the people. The calf-worship established by the first Jeroboam was still per-

* II. Chronicles, xxvi. 16—21. II. Kings xv. 4, 5.

petuated, and great honours were paid to the symbolical figure which Aaron had not thought it unbecoming to fabricate, but which had moved the utmost wrath of Moses. On the death of Jeroboam, which occurred about 784 B.C., the country fell into a state of anarchy for eleven years. His son Zachariah succeeded to the monarchy of Israel in 773 B.C., but was soon afterwards put to death by Shallum, who, however, reigned only a month, being then killed by Menahem, who ruled for ten years, but failed to give any satisfaction to the priests. At this time, Israel was threatened by an external enemy, whose assaults were facilitated by the disunion and depravity existing in the realm itself.

SAMARIA.

Assyria was in the zenith of its fortune. The vast empire on the banks of the Tigris had extended its power considerably to the south. Babylonia was reduced to an inferior and tributary position; Syria was overrun; and now the country of the Israelites was menaced. Pul, the first Assyrian monarch mentioned in the Bible, has been identified by interpreters of the cuneiform inscriptions with a certain king whose achievements are there recorded; but the name cannot be made out with certainty, and indeed is variously represented by different authorities. According to the Scriptural narrative, however, Pul struck such terror into the Israelitish nation that Menahem was glad to make submission, and to purchase immunity from further danger by a heavy tribute, which was wrung from the people by severe exactions. The Syrian possessions of Menahem were counted by the Ninevite monarch among his dependencies; and the Israelitish king, on succeeding to the throne, ought to have applied to Pul for confirmation in his sovereignty. This, it would seem, he neglected to do, and was therefore regarded by the Assyrian as a rebel. To what extent Pul invaded the kingdom of Israel is doubtful; but he led a military expedition against it in 771 B.C., and extorted from Menahem the homage and the money-payment which he conceived to be his due. Menahem was succeeded by his son Pekahiah, who began to reign in 761 B.C., and two years later was put to death by one of his captains, named Pekah, who seized the throne of Israel.

Attempts were made by this monarch to restore the power of Israel; for which purpose he concluded a treaty with Rezin, King of Damascus (then once more governed by its own rulers), with a view to an attack on Judah. The nefarious compact began to be carried out in the latter portion of the reign of Jotham, who died in 742 B.C.; but it was under his successor, Ahaz, that the more important incidents of the war took place. Jerusalem was besieged, and Ahaz, in his

extremity, implored Tiglath-Pileser for assistance, declaring himself the servant of the Assyrian king, and sending him a heavy tribute, derived not merely from his own palace, but also from the and followed many strange rites, probably including some form of star-worship. The King of Assyria hearkened to the request of Ahaz, and despatched an army to his aid, but not before many

THE KINGDOMS OF JUDAH AND ISRAEL.

frequently-plundered Temple. He was probably the less disinclined to make this submission to a Pagan sovereign, from the fact that he was himself a Pagan. It is recorded of him that he sacrificed and burnt incense on the high places and under trees; that he made his son "pass through the fire," which must mean that he was a follower of Moloch; that he recognised the Syrian gods, introduced a foreign altar from Damascus, serious disasters had been suffered. In a great battle between the Israelites and the men of Judah, fought about 741 B.C., the latter were defeated with terrible slaughter, and it is said in the Chronicles that 200,000 persons, including women, were led away captive. On this occasion, the feeling of consanguinity between the two branches of the Hebrew race came out in a way which touchingly relieves the darker features of the

history. At the suggestion of the prophet Oded, the Israelitish warriors gave up their captives, when certain of the Ephraimites clothed, fed, and anointed them, and, setting the feeble upon asses, took them to their brethren in the city of Jericho.

While these events were going on, Rezin of Damascus was operating against Elath, which he seized. The Edomites also invaded the land, and made many prisoners; and the Philistines, pouring into Judah, took Bethshemesh, Ajalon, Gederoth, Timnah, and some other places. The condition of the kingdom was desperate, and, but for the diversion effected by Tiglath-Pileser, it might have been fatal. In response, however, to the petition of Ahaz, the Assyrians marched against Damascus in 740 B.C., captured the city, killed Rezin, and carried off large numbers of the people into slavery. The kingdom of Damascus was thus brought to an end, and Judæa had one enemy the less. The siege of Jerusalem was abandoned, either in consequence of the Assyrian intervention, or a little before; but the Jewish monarch was still left in a state of weakness and peril. He became a mere vassal of the Ninevite sovereign, and appeared before him at Damascus to do homage. It was in consequence of this visit to Syria that Ahaz adopted some of the foreign superstitions that are laid to his charge; but it is evident that others were of earlier date, and were, in fact, of Canaanitish rather than Syrian parentage. Israel suffered greatly from the arms of Tiglath-Pileser. The northern and trans-Jordanic provinces of that kingdom were added to the Assyrian Empire, and the people deported into other regions. Pekah, now reduced to the position of a feeble and petty chieftain, was unable to make any further attacks on Judah, and in the year 739 B.C. was slain by Hoshea, who reigned in his stead, after a long period of anarchy. Ahaz died in 726 B.C., and was succeeded by his son Hezekiah. The prophet Isaiah uttered some of the most memorable of his denunciations and foreshadowing during the reign of that idolatrous king who (according to the more extreme indictment against him) had made Jerusalem itself, and every other city of Judah, familiar with the many fantastical or indecent rites which he had borrowed from the surrounding lands, and some, perhaps, even from the more distant East.

The kingdom of Israel now embraced little more than the territory of Ephraim. The hold of the Israelitish monarchs on the country farther north was always somewhat precarious; and when their power was confronted, first by the Damascenes, and then by the Assyrians, the kingdom dwindled to the tribe. Hoshea succeeded to a small and shattered sovereignty, and his abilities were not equal to its renovation. He followed idolatrous practices, but not to the same extent as some of his predecessors. Nevertheless, he was marked out for destruction. The throne of Assyria was now filled by a monarch who in the Bible is called Shalmaneser, but whose name is not to be found on the monuments, having apparently been erased by his successor. Dreading the power of this formidable sovereign—who seems, indeed, to have attacked Israel without any provocation—Hoshea sought to propitiate him by the payment of tribute, but shortly afterwards entered into a secret correspondence with the King of Egypt, and, probably in the hope of obtaining succour from him, refused to make any further money contributions to Shalmaneser. The latter, accordingly, sent an army against his rebellious vassal, about the year 723 B.C., and carried him into captivity. Samaria was besieged for more than two years, and in 721 B.C. yielded to the Assyrian arms, perhaps during the reign of Sargon, the successor to Shalmaneser. Hoshea, it is to be feared, was treated with great barbarity, and from that time forth disappears from history. With him, the kingdom of Israel, Samaria, or Ephraim—for it is called by all these names—came irrecoverably to an end. Some of the people may have found refuge in Egypt; the rest were taken in vast droves into Assyria, while their places were supplied by men from Babylon, and other parts of the great Mesopotamian Empire. Thus a large proportion of the Hebrew race was dispersed; but Judah still retained its independence, and carried on the traditions of the Mosaic times.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH.

Condition of Judah and Israel in the Eighth Century B.C.—The Dispersions of the Israelitish Tribes—Assyrian Emigration into Samaria—The Later Samaritans and their Tenets—Doubtful Fate of the Israelitish Tribes—Reign of Hezekiah—Measures against Idolatry, and for the Promotion of Religion—War with Assyria—Submission of Hezekiah to Sennacherib—Second War with Assyria—Destruction of the Army of Sennacherib—Later Events of the Reign of Hezekiah—Accession of Manasseh—Re-establishment of Idolatry—Diminution of the Kingdom under Manasseh—Brief Reign of Amon—Accession of Josiah—Discovery of the Book of the Law—Jehoahaz: Jehoiakim—War with Nebuchadnezzar—The Jewish Captivities—Reign of Jehoiachin—Capture of Jerusalem by the Babylonians—Reign of Zedekiah—Alliance with Egypt against Babylon—Siege of Jerusalem—Conduct of Jeremiah—Fall of Jerusalem, and Extinction of the Jewish Monarchy.

For several years before the capture of Samaria by Sargon, or Shalmaneser IV., and the carrying of the people into captivity, both divisions of the Hebrew realm—Judah and Israel—had fallen into a state which to all thoughtful observers was premonitory of approaching decay. The two monarchies were sometimes at issue, sometimes devastated by surrounding nations of greater strength or more earnest purpose. In the northern kingdom especially revolution succeeded revolution; the assassination of rulers was a common occurrence; the political system was either feeble or despotic; the priestly order was in antagonism with the secular government; and the prosperity of the people decayed rapidly. The same evil symptoms, or most of them, were developed in Judah also, but in a less degree, and with a greater power of recovery from depressing influences. In both lands idolatry was recognised, if not encouraged. A class of indolent nobles fed upon and oppressed the needy. Excessive luxury on the one side was confronted by excessive poverty on the other. When money was lent by the wealthy, the debtor, in the event of his being unable to pay, was sold into slavery. Drunkenness was among the vices of the Jewish race at this period of their history: even the priests and the prophets were given to the coarsest excesses in wine.* The women indulged in gorgeous attire, in frivolous occupations, in vain and often wanton allurements; and, according to the later prophets, even the priests were infected by the universal corruption, and, growing sordid and worldly in their habits, bartered truth for money, taught for hire, and supported the rich in their iniquities.† After the subjugation of the Israelites by Hazael of Syria, the amount of misery endured by the people was grievous; and it became still worse on the conquest of the country by the Assyrians. Society was then completely disorganised in Samaria and the adjoining provinces. Banditti wandered over the land, robbing wherever they could find booty, occasionally engaging in predatory warfare, and seeking refuge in woods and caves. Large bodies of the people emigrated to Egypt, and it seemed as if the extinction of Israel had arrived.

The dispersion of the tribes forming the northern kingdom is one of the most remarkable facts of early history. The first of these enforced emigrations seems to have resulted from the invasion of Pul, King of Assyria, who, about 771 B.C., marched an army into Israel, as already related, and chastised the insubordination of Menahem. Although bribed to retire, it is probable that he did not leave without taking a number of the people with him, since this was the policy of the Assyrian monarchs, as of other Oriental despots in the ancient world. A much greater deportation, however, followed in 740 B.C., when Tiglath-Pileser devastated the land, and carried off large bodies of captives. A second expedition by the same conqueror, not long after, was signalised by another seizure of the Israelitish population. On this occasion, it would appear that the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the eastern half of the Manassites, were torn from their native country. Here we have three successive deportations within a period of not much more than thirty years. But a fourth and still greater removal took place in 721 B.C., when Shalmaneser IV., or Sargon, "carried Israel away into Assyria," and settled his captives in various cities of the Medes, and in other parts of the empire.‡ The dispersion, therefore, so far as the kingdom of Israel was concerned, was accomplished in exactly fifty years. The design of the Assyrian monarchs, moreover, was so completely brought about that Samaria would have

* Isaiah, xxviii. 7, 1.

† Many details of the wrong-doings both of Israel and Judah are given by the prophets Amos and Isaiah, whose united testimony covers a period of some half-a-century.

‡ II. Kings, xvii. 6; xviii. 11.

been entirely desolate had it not been colonised, several years later, with men from Babylon and other cities.* It is often supposed that this Assyrian emigration into Samaria took place under Shalmaneser or Sargon. Yet it appears more probable that it was in the time of Esar-haddon; indeed, this is expressly asserted in the Book of Ezra.† Archbishop Ussher dates the settlement about the year 678 B.C.; which would be early in Esar-haddon's reign.

The colonists in Samaria were of course idolaters, and they introduced the worship of their own gods into the country where they were planted. Some time afterwards, believing themselves to be afflicted by wild beasts because they knew not in what manner to worship the deity of the land, they brought their condition before the notice of the King of Assyria, who sent one of the Israelitish priests to instruct them in the principles of the Hebrew faith. That the descendants of these people were to a considerable extent Judaical in their religion is indubitable; yet they preserved a good deal of their original Paganism, and were always regarded with distrust and dislike by the genuine descendants of Abraham. Subsequently they mingled with certain Jewish renegades who took refuge among them, and thus acquired some degree of consanguinity with the Hebrew race; but they maintained a distinct nationality, although not disinclined to claim relationship with the people who had conquered the Land of Canaan after their long bondage in Egypt. They are known to history as the New Samaritans, in contradistinction to the old; or as Cuthæan Samaritans, because several of their ancestors came from the city of Cuthah, which was included in the Assyrian dominions, though it is now impossible to determine the precise site. The territory they nominally possessed comprehended the ancient domain of Ephraim, together with the portion of the half-tribe of Manasseh which dwelt west of the Jordan. But in truth they were concentrated in a few towns and villages in the centre of the extensive district called Samaria. Their semi-Jewish religion they appear to have held in great veneration, and they even set up a claim to superior orthodoxy over the genuine Hebrews.

About the year 409 B.C. a man of priestly lineage, named Manasseh, was expelled from Jerusalem for an unlawful marriage, and afterwards built a temple for the Samaritans on Mount Gerizim. His wife was of Cuthæan origin, and among the colonists of that stock he remained, *imbuing them with no small portion of his own* religious creed, and, whether intentionally or not, creating a schism which increased the animosity of the Jews towards these children of a heathenish race. The temple on Mount Gerizim became a rival to that at Jerusalem, and the mountain is still regarded by all Samaritans as of greater holiness than the city of David, or any other spot on earth. A priesthood in antagonism to that of the real Hebrews was set up at Gerizim, and Samaria became the asylum of malcontent or heretical Jews. There was doubtless some admixture of Jewish blood among the New Samaritans even before the building of the temple on Mount Gerizim; but it is probable that the creation of a new religious centre attracted many more of the older population to the cities of the Assyrian colonists. These curious and interesting people have never acknowledged any other sacred volumes than the Five Books of Moses, their copy of which they allege to be more ancient and exact than any possessed by the Jews. As late as 1590 of the Christian era, one of their high-priests, named Eleazar, wrote a book in which he said that the Samaritan character was the same as that which Jehovah had employed in writing the Law he gave to Moses; that the Jews had no priests of the race of Aaron, but that he himself was the one hundred and twenty-second in descent from that patriarch. The Samaritan Pentateuch is interesting to Biblical scholars, as presenting some important variations from the commonly-received version. Although quoted by the early Fathers of the Christian Church, it was long doubted whether the Samaritan Pentateuch had any real existence, as no copy had reached Europe down to the early part of the seventeenth century. In 1616, however, Pietro della Valle obtained a manuscript from the Samaritans of Damascus, and others have since found their way westward. The Jews pronounce this version of the Pentateuch to be a clumsy forgery; but Jewish opinion on such a topic must be recorded with caution, as that of highly prejudiced adversaries. Under the Roman Empire, the Samaritans were, in the eyes of the Hebrews, a proscribed and segregated race, like the Cagots of the Middle Ages. A small settlement of these people is still to be found at Nâblus, the ancient Shechem; but they are no longer of any importance in the history of the world.

The fate of the Israelitish tribes removed by the Assyrian conqueror has been the subject of much speculation, and of not a few romantic dreams. The probability is that they were absorbed in the nations among whom they settled;

* II. Kings, xvii. 24. † Ezra, iv. 2.

but by some it has been supposed that they formed distinct communities in various lands, where they still await their final restoration to the territory possessed of old. A passage has been quoted from the apocryphal Second Book of Esdras, as the probable origin of this belief. "Those," says the writer, speaking of a great multitude seen in a vision, "are the Ten Tribes, which were carried away prisoners out of their own land in the time of Osea [Hoshea] the king, whom Salmanasar, the king of Assyria, led away captive, and he carried them over the waters, and so came they into another land. But they took this counsel among themselves, that they would leave the multitude of the heathen, and go forth into a further country, where never mankind dwelt, that they might there keep their statutes, which they never kept in their own land. And they entered into Euphrates by the narrow passages of the river. . . . For through that country there was a great way to go, namely, of a year and a half: and the same region is called Arsareth"—or Ararat.* According to this, it would appear that the tribes (there cannot have been so many as ten belonging to Israel at the time of the dispersion) settled in Armenia; but the authority of the so-called Book of Esdras, which was probably written in the early Christian times, is regarded as of very little weight. The Afghans are often said to be of Hebrew origin; and some bold speculators have recognised the descendants of the Lost Tribes in the Red Indians of America. Even the English race has been traced up to the same source; indeed, there is no subject on which conjecture has been more wildly active. It is generally believed, however, that the Christian converts addressed by Peter in his First Epistle were of Jewish blood; and the same thing has been asserted of the modern Nestorians.†

Israel was thus utterly subdued; but Judah still remained independent. The ruler of the southern kingdom at the period we have reached was Hezekiah, the son of Ahaz, whose reign began in 726 B.C., between five and six years before the desolation of Samaria. The actions of this sovereign are much commended by the writers of the Books of Kings and Chronicles. He was a devoted adherent of the Jewish religion, and omitted no means of promoting its interests and expelling idolatry. He cleansed, repaired, and reopened the Temple, which had been closed and neglected during the idolatrous reign of Ahaz. The priests and Levites were restored to their privileges; the rites of religion were followed with great particularity; and active measures were taken against all alien faiths. Not only were the idols destroyed, but the equivocal forms of worship which were conducted on "the high places" were forbidden, and the secret or symbolical observances of Paganism suppressed. Hezekiah even broke in pieces the brazen serpent which Moses had made in the wilderness, but which had since become an object of adoration. He also determined to celebrate the Passover in its primitive grandeur, or rather with greater magnificence than had ever before been known. That the two divisions of the Hebrew race might be equally represented on this solemn occasion, he sent messengers into the neighbouring kingdom, to invite the subjects of Hoshea, who had not yet reached the climax of their misfortunes. The greater number of the Israelites, however, treated his exhortations with scorn; yet several members of the tribes of Asher, Manasseh, and Zebulun, went to Jerusalem to attend the ceremonial. This Passover was kept for the unusual period of fourteen days, and, as we are told in the Book of Chronicles (II. xxx.), everything was done with the greatest zeal, splendour, and enthusiasm. It is obvious that the religious observances in the Temple received an immense impulse from the policy of Hezekiah, and that he did his utmost to revive the sacerdotal spirit in the nation. Even the priests were not considered sufficiently earnest, and the superior fervour of the Levites, in the matter of sacrifices before the Passover, is commended in the Chronicles. The year of Hezekiah's Passover is set down as 726 B.C., about five years earlier than the final deportation of the Israelites.

In the following year, Hezekiah attacked the Philistines, and wrested from them the cities which his father had lost. This emboldened him to refuse the tribute which, in accordance with the terms made by Ahaz with Tiglath-Pileser, was due to the Assyrian king, Shalmaneser. Why Judah was not attacked at once it is impossible to say; for the invasion of Samaria and the siege of Tyre, which doubtless checked the progress of the Assyrian arms, did not occur until a few years after. Still, whatever the cause, it would seem, if the usually accepted chronology be correct, that Hezekiah was unmolested for a period of twelve years. During this interval he did much towards organising his kingdom; but it was chiefly with reference to religious matters, and to the collection and due ordering of tithes. Of military prepara-

* II. Esdras, xiii. 40—45.

† Milman's History of the Jews, Book VIII.

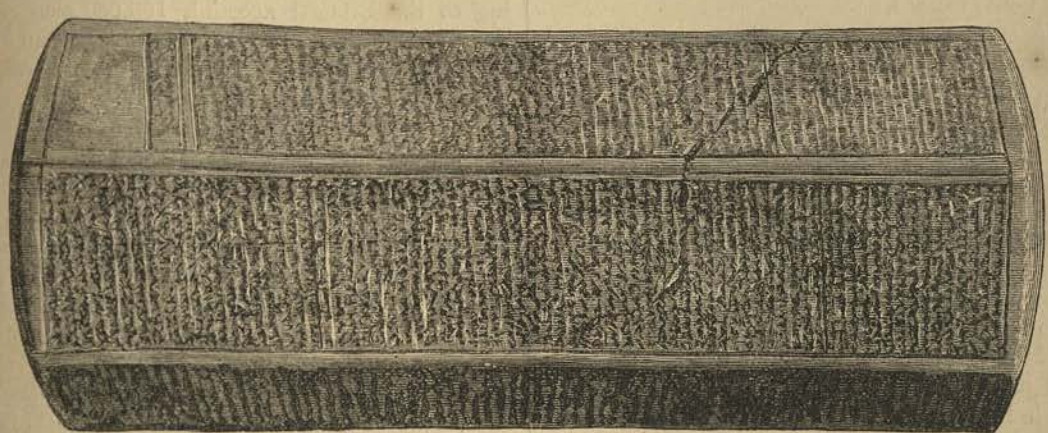
tion against the Assyrian attack, which was sure to come sooner or later, there was none. The fortresses were left unstrengthened; the walls of Jerusalem itself were allowed to remain in a ruinous and enfeebled state; and no help was sought from Egypt—an alliance which had always been forbidden by the prophets of Jehovah. At length, however, in the year 713 B.C. (according to the Biblical chronology), the invading army set out. The intelligence of its approach struck consternation into the Jewish people, and measures of defence were hurriedly adopted. The external wall of Jerusalem was repaired; a second wall was built wherever it seemed necessary; and the moat between the two was filled. The assistance of Egypt, moreover, was now considered desirable. Judæa was wanting in chariots and horses; and the nobles—apparently without any instructions from Hezekiah—despatched to the reigning Pharaoh an embassy, with a large amount of treasure, in the hope that he might be induced to grant the required aid. Isaiah, however, scorned and denounced the idea of Egyptian succour. He called upon the people to rely solely on divine help, and promised that the Assyrians would be exterminated by other than human agency.

The Assyrian army was of the most formidable description. An enormous force of infantry was accompanied by vast numbers of chariots and mounted soldiers. Medes, Persians, and Armenians added to the strength and military effectiveness of this great host; and clouds of camp-followers hung upon the rear, ready to execute those works of manual labour which are required in sieges. All the science of the age was at the disposal of the Assyrian monarch. Rude wheels were erected in various places, which, being worked by the foot, pumped away the water from besieged towns. The usual mode of siege in those days was to "cast a bank" against the walls of a city—that is to say, to raise earthworks of such height as to be level with the battlements. This was done in several instances by the invaders in their advance through Judæa, and many places surrendered. The King of Assyria at that time was Sennacherib. It is evident from the whole course of his reign that Sennacherib was a ruler of great energy and signal military power. He had already prevailed against Sidon, Tyre, Edom, Ashdod, Egypt, and Israel; and, flushed with success, he now directed his full might against Hezekiah. The approach of the enemy inspired the people of Jerusalem with great terror, and

ISRAELITES GOING INTO CAPTIVITY.

at the same time, by a contrast not unusual at such periods of excitement, led to an orgie of frantic indulgence among the less religiously disposed. "Let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we shall die," were the words by which these revellers excused their debaucheries, and snatched a wild delight from the very shadow of impending ruin.*

While the Jews were awaiting the issue of events, Tirhakah, the Ethiopian King of Egypt, sent ambassadors to Hezekiah, to concert measures with him as to the resistance which should be offered to the ambitious designs of Sennacherib. Egypt and Assyria were at that time in a position of rivalry, and it was essential to the former to keep the latter out of the intervening Jewish territory. It is curious to find the old oppressors of the Hebrews coming forward as their allies (as, indeed, they had done when the Israelitish monarch, Hoshea, was threatened by Shalmaneser IV.); but in such matters policy is the great arbiter, and ancient feuds give way before present necessities. Of this embassy there is very little historical evidence; but it seems to be revealed in the seventeenth and eighteenth chapters of Isaiah, according to the rendering of the German scholar, Ewald, which, however, differs very widely from the authorised English version. What was the precise result of this mission does not appear; but at any rate it failed to avert the discomfiture of Hezekiah. The Jewish sovereign lost heart as the Assyrians penetrated into the land, and probably distrusted the mettle of his subjects for encountering so powerful a foe. The sensualists who provoked the wrath of Isaiah were hardly the men to fight against the martial hosts of Sennacherib, and Hezekiah saw that a compromise was the only way of averting complete subjection. He therefore despatched messengers to the King of Assyria, who was then at Lachish, a city of the Amorites. No more humble submission was ever made. The ruler of Jerusalem acknowledged that he had offended: he begged that the Assyrian monarch would retire from his land, and he undertook to bear any penalty which might be imposed on him. Sennacherib, in reply, demanded of the King of Judah three hundred talents of silver, and thirty talents of gold. It was only with the utmost difficulty that Hezekiah could furnish the required sum. To do so he was obliged to sacrifice all his own treasures, and to appropriate the silver that he found in the Temple, the gold adornments of which he was constrained to cut off.



THE GREAT CYLINDER OF SENNACHERIB. †

An account of these transactions is contained in the annals of Sennacherib inscribed on the great cylinder in the British Museum. It is there stated that the Assyrian conqueror took forty-six walled cities in the course of his expedition, together with 200,000 prisoners; that he besieged Jerusalem; that Hezekiah promised to pay eight hundred talents of silver, and thirty of gold; and that the Jewish sovereign was deprived of a part of his dominions, which were given to the kings of Ekron, Ashdod, and Gaza—three of the confederated cities of the Philistines. Sennacherib appears to have suspected Hezekiah of inciting the Philistines to rebellion; but one of the most serious of his transgressions was undoubtedly the refusal to pay

* Isaiah, xxii. 13.

† A Hexagonal Prism of terra-cotta, from Kouiunjik, containing the annals of the first eight years of the reign of Sennacherib (B.C. 702—694), with an account of the expedition against Hezekiah.

the accustomed tribute. With respect to the discrepancy between the statement in the Book of Kings, that Sennacherib required the payment of three hundred talents of silver, and the assertion on the Assyrian cylinder that Hezekiah promised to pay as many as eight hundred, the probable explanation is that the undertaking was to furnish the larger sum, but that Hezekiah was unable to collect more than the smaller. This, however, seems to have temporarily bought off the resentment of the Assyrian monarch, who passed on into Egypt, where, after some successes, he found himself in a position of peril, and was compelled to raise the siege of Pelusium. In returning to Assyria, he again made war on Judah; and this was a more serious attack than that by which it had been preceded.

It is possible that Sennacherib was incensed against Hezekiah on account of the fine not having been fully paid (if such was indeed the fact); or he may have desired to possess himself of some strong places in Judah, as a counterpoise to the power of Egypt. He had no little reason to doubt the sincerity of the Jewish monarch's professions of fealty. It was evident that Hezekiah permitted himself to be greatly influenced by the prophet Isaiah, whose passionate opposition to Assyria could not have been unknown to Sennacherib. Isaiah had induced the king to dismiss his chief minister, Shebna (who had probably been inclined to temporise), and to put in his place Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah, a man of decidedly anti-Assyrian leanings. Consequently, it was not very remarkable that Sennacherib should wish to obtain material guarantees for the future submission of the Jewish sovereign. He therefore took Lachish, and sent a detachment of his forces against Jerusalem. One of the commanders, named Rabshakeh (unless this was the title of his office), sent a message to Hezekiah and to the Jewish people, requiring them to submit to the Great King, and ridiculing the assumption that they had any means, natural or supernatural, of resisting his power. Particularly addressing the people, and speaking in the name of his master, Rabshakeh demanded that they should signify their homage by a present, and added that in that case he would leave them to their own vines and fig-trees until he should come at some later epoch, and take them away to a land like their own—a land of corn and wine, of oil and honey, that so they might live, and not die. The policy of deportation was a favourite one with the ancient Oriental monarchs, and indeed is not unusual with despots even in our own times But how this could have been any inducement to the Jewish people to welcome the rule of Assyria, it is impossible to say.

Hezekiah and his ministers were dismayed at the prospect before them; but Isaiah roused the courage of the nation by appeals to their religious convictions, and by prophecies of the certain discomfiture of the invaders. In the meanwhile, Sennacherib, emboldened by his success at Lachish, besieged Libnah, a city in the south-west of Judæa, but, while pursuing these operations, was alarmed by a rumour that Tirhakah, the Ethiopian King of Egypt, was marching against him. He seems to have suspected a secret correspondence between the Egyptian and Jewish sovereigns, and accordingly sent a renewed message of defiance to the latter. It was shortly after this that, according to the Biblical account, 185,000 men of the army of Sennacherib were miraculously slain in the course of one night. Where the army was stationed at that time is not distinctly shown. People generally think of the event as happening just outside Jerusalem; but there is nothing to support this view, and it would appear that the scene of the catastrophe was at Libnah, which Sennacherib was then besieging. The detachment sent against Jerusalem when Rabshakeh uttered his threats, and made his strange promises, was probably withdrawn when the Assyrian marched against Libnah; and it may have been only a few messengers who conveyed the renewed menace to the people of the capital. All that is said in the Bible is that the soldiers were slain by the angel of the Lord "in the camp of the Assyrians." The annals of Sennacherib, preserved on the ancient cylinder in the British Museum, make no allusion to any such event; but the Egyptians had a tradition that the army of the invader was defeated at Pelusium owing to the miraculous destruction of the soldiers' weapons by field-mice.* The probability is that the Assyrian army was devastated by a pestilence, and that Sennacherib, finding himself unable, with his reduced strength, to encounter the advancing forces of Egypt, raised the siege of Libnah, and abandoned the country. The dates of these Assyrian wars with Judæa and Egypt are uncertain. According to the Biblical chronology of Archbishop Ussher, the first inroad took place in 713 B.C., and the

* See Chapter IX. of this History.—The Biblical narratives of Sennacherib's dealing with Judah are contained in II. Kings, xix.; II. Chronicles, xxxii.; and Isaiah, xxxvii. In some respects they are incomplete, and the two latter speak of the two expeditions of the Assyrian monarch as though they were one. Even in the Book of Kings, the distinction is not very clear.

second in 710; but the more modern opinion is that the years were 700 and 698 B.C.

Judæa was now delivered from all fear of Assyria, and the rest of Hezekiah's reign appears to have passed in tranquillity. How long that reign lasted after the discomfiture of Sennacherib is doubtful. The life of the Jewish king was prolonged fifteen years when he was languishing in a mortal illness; but Scriptural commentators are not agreed as to whether this was before or subsequent to the second Assyrian invasion. The death of Hezekiah took place in 698 or 697 B.C., after a reign of some twenty-nine years. During the reign of this Hebrew sovereign, an embassy from Babylonia was received at Jerusalem; but it is impossible to fix it at any period. Hezekiah ostentatiously showed all his treasures to the ambassadors; and it is thought that this display of riches excited the cupidity of the ruler of Babylon, Merodach-Baladan, and led eventually to the overthrow of the Jewish kingdom by the restored monarchy of Chaldæa.

The successor to Hezekiah was his son Manasseh, who was only twelve years old at the time of his father's death. The policy of the boy-king must in the first instance have been directed by the advisers who surrounded him; but the tendency of the reign generally was of a nature to offend the prophets and the priests. The king regarded an alliance with Babylon as desirable, and on this account favoured a degree of toleration which resulted in the practice of idolatrous rites, not only in Judah, but in Jerusalem; not only in Jerusalem, but in the very Temple itself. Manasseh built altars for astral worship in the two courts of that edifice. His children were made to pass through the fire in the valley of Ben-Hinnom. A carved image was set up in the house of Jehovah, and it is recorded of the Jewish monarch that he used enchantments and witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit. The ritual of Baal and Ashtaroth, which Solomon had favoured, was revived by this apostate. Thus, the religions of Babylon, of Ammon, and of the Phœnicians, were honoured in the land which had been dedicated to a very different faith. The prophets (doubtless including Isaiah, who was now old) denounced the acts of the king, but in vain. Much innocent blood is said to have been spilt by this monarch, and a doubtful tradition charges him with having murdered Isaiah. Manasseh hoped to secure the friendship and support of the Babylonian viceroy or vassal; but the association, when obtained, was not worth having. Babylon was still overshadowed by the greater might of Assyria; and when the ruler on whom Manasseh relied, and whom he joined in resisting the sovereign authority of Nineveh, was overthrown by Esar-haddon, the wrath of that powerful monarch fell with unbroken force upon the Jewish king. Shortly after 670 B.C., Esar-haddon sent an army into Judæa, and Manasseh, being taken prisoner, was carried before the Assyrian potentate at Babylon. Ultimately he was released, and, on returning to Jerusalem, is said, in the Book of Chronicles, to have suppressed idolatry, restored the national faith, fortified the capital, and put warriors in all the walled cities of his dominions. The strength of the kingdom, however, had probably been much reduced during the earlier years of this monarch's reign. It is believed that the Philistines, Moabites, and Ammonites, who had been tributary under Hezekiah, threw off all dependence under Manasseh, and the Jewish realm could not well suffer abatement. Egypt was now once more rising into importance as a military power, under Psammetichus I.; and the politicians of Judæa, with the king at their head, seem to have turned their regards in that direction. Manasseh, however, died in 643 B.C., before any of his later designs could be carried into effect.

His Egyptian leanings are to be traced in the name of his son and successor, Amon, evidently called after the chief divinity of Thebes. It is obvious, therefore, that Manasseh had, before his death, fallen away from the re-awakened zeal for the Jewish faith which had been prompted by his captivity at Babylon. He left behind him a very doubtful reputation. His body was not consigned to the sepulchres of the house of David, as was usual with the Jewish kings, but was buried in the garden of Uzza (a piece of ground attached to the royal palace), and his name was long held in abhorrence. Amon followed the idolatrous practices to which his father was prone, and after a reign of two years was slain in his palace by those of his own household. He also was buried in the garden of Uzza, and his son Josiah reigned in his place. This prince, when he came to the throne in 641 B.C., was only eight years old. At an early period, however, he showed a strong inclination towards the national faith, and, from the twelfth to the eighteenth year of his reign, made a progress throughout both Judah and Israel, destroying all those evidences of idolatry whose fate it was to be perpetually broken, and perpetually renewed. Such, at least, is the account given in the Second Book of Chronicles (xxxiv.); but the prophet Zephaniah draws a very different picture of the state of things existing in the reign of this monarch. He speaks of idolatry still polluting the land

in various forms; he charges even the orthodox Jewish priests and prophets with many crimes and corruptions; and he states that the poor were oppressed, and that the judges perverted the law.*

The religious zeal of Josiah prompted him to restore the Temple at Jerusalem; and it was while these works were proceeding that the priest Hilkiah discovered a copy of the Book of the Law which appears to have had some special value and authority, for it was read before the people, and produced a very powerful impression on Josiah. It is generally supposed that the book had been familiarly known up to the time of Hezekiah, but that the idolatrous Manasseh destroyed all the copies except this particular one, which remained hidden in the Temple until accidentally discovered by Hilkiah during the repair of that edifice. Much has been hazarded as to the exact nature of the volume; but it is impossible to state anything with certainty. It may have been the whole of the Pentateuch; it may have been only the last division of that writing. The most usually accepted opinion is that the book in question was Deuteronomy—"the Repetition of the Law," as the Greek name signifies; and some modern critics have even thought that the writing was not "found," but compiled, by Hilkiah, who thus put into definite form the traditions which had been handed down by priests and Levites. A peculiarly solemn Passover kept by Josiah followed the production of the Book of the Law said to have been found in the Temple. This Passover was in the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah, and the date is believed to have been 623 B.C.: the discovery of the volume was in the previous year. After a reign of rather more than thirty years, Josiah was killed in a battle with Necho, King of Egypt, the details of which have already been related.† The Biblical chronology fixes this event at 610 B.C.: it was more probably in 609.

The reign of Jehoahaz, the son and successor of Josiah, was short and uneventful. He ruled only three months, and was then deposed by Necho, who, returning from the capture of Carchemish, gave orders that Jehoahaz should be taken to Riblah, a place on the high road between Palestine and Babylonia. Being there thrown into chains, he was carried to Egypt, and in that land of ancient bondage died shortly after. The principal fact related of him is that he encouraged idolatry, as so many of his forefathers had done; but his offence in the eyes of the Egyptian monarch was doubtless some known or suspected disposition to pursue a hostile policy. Necho set up in his place another son of Josiah, until then called Eliakim—a name which his patron changed to Jehoiakim. The position of this prince was extremely unfortunate. As a creature of the reigning Pharaoh, he provoked the wrath of Nebuchadnezzar, who in the war with Egypt was acting as the lieutenant of his father, Nabopolassar, King of Babylon; and when that warrior entered Judah, Necho was unable to protect his vassal. The power of Babylon had now succeeded to that of Assyria; but Judah was in no better position than before. Jerusalem was assailed, and, after a brief siege, captured by the Babylonian forces, about the year 606 B.C., or probably a little later. It would seem to have been the original intention of Nebuchadnezzar to carry the vanquished king prisoner to Babylon; but he afterwards accepted a promise of fealty, and allowed him to retain the Jewish throne. In this tributary position he continued three years, at the end of which time he rebelled, and declared his independence. Mixed bodies of Chaldæans, Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites were sent against him by Nebuchadnezzar, who had now succeeded to the Babylonian throne, and the whole of Judah was wasted by their exactions. Of the disastrous reign of Jehoiakim scarcely any details are preserved. It lasted ten or eleven years, and was fruitful in nothing but calamity. Whether in battle, or by the hands of his own subjects, Jehoiakim came to a violent end, either in 599 or 598 B.C. The prophet Jeremiah tells us that the body of this sovereign was for some time exposed on the open ground, and then buried with ignominy beyond the gates of Jerusalem. Jehoiakim is said to have been a wicked and impious monarch; but in truth we know very little about him.

This was the age of Jeremiah, and of some other prophets. The seventy years' captivity of the Jews commenced in the same epoch, being dated from 606 B.C., at which time (or perhaps a year or two later) Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem, and established the Babylonian power over the whole of Judæa. It was probably on this occasion that he sent to Babylon certain selected children, of whom Daniel was one. A good deal of doubt, however, surrounds the various captivities of the Jewish race. All that plainly appears is that there were numerous deportations of the southern Hebrews, as formerly of the northern. The first of the

* See the three chapters of Zephaniah. A writer in Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible" says that the condition described by the prophet must be referred to Amon's reign. (Art. Amon.) But the reference in the book itself is to the reign of Josiah.

† See Chapter X.

Jewish, as distinguished from the Israelitish, captivities was in 713 B.C., when Sennacherib carried away into Assyria 200,000 persons whom he had taken in his earlier Jewish campaign. Nebuchadnezzar removed many thousands of the people in his several expeditions. Whether any large deportation ensued on the first taking of Jerusalem, is far from clear. The fact is not recorded either in the Book of Kings or the Book of Chronicles; but, as the seventy years' captivity prophesied by Jeremiah terminated in 536 B.C., it is inferred that it must have commenced in 606. In connection with the earlier siege, Daniel mentions only the choice of certain boys to serve in the royal palace at Babylon, and the despoiling of the Temple to enrich an alien shrine. But there were subsequent attacks on Jerusalem, and repeated removals of the people; and in any case it is unquestionable that the population of Judæa was much reduced.

The successor to Jehoiakim was his son Jehoiachin, who was equally opposed to the priestly and prophetical bodies. The little kingdom which it was his evil fate to rule, and which seldom brought anything but trouble to its monarchs, was in a position of such extreme weakness as to be quite incapable of withstanding assaults. For some years past, Judæa had been a battle-ground for the contending forces of Egypt and Babylon, and was thus compelled by the course of events to occupy a subservient position towards either the one sovereignty or the other. Josiah had conferred a little temporary prosperity on the land, and had even exercised some degree of authority over districts which had formerly been included in the Kingdom of Israel; for we read that he destroyed idolatry in Samaria as well as in his own more immediate dominions, and that Israelites as well as Jews attended the solemn Passover at Jerusalem. But all this had now gone by, and the southern kingdom could not even guard its own life. The Babylonian monarchs had taken from the rulers of Egypt all those possessions between the Isthmus of Suez and the Euphrates which the latter had at one time held. Consequently, no power able to hold its own against Babylon existed in that part of the world. Judæa lay helplessly open to attack whenever Nebuchadnezzar chose to conduct or send his armies thither. The motive for these repeated onslaughts is not apparent; for the petty and feeble Jewish kingdom could hardly have been a danger, or even an annoyance, to the mighty sovereignty which had grown up in the land of the Chaldæans.

The persecution, however, was prolonged and bitter. Jehoiachin had scarcely ascended the throne when Jerusalem was again besieged. The means of resistance were slight, and the city quickly surrendered. The unhappy monarch, accompanied by his mother, the princes of the royal house, and the various officers of the palace, went out from Jerusalem to the tent of Nebuchadnezzar, and made a submission which does not seem to have been qualified by any conditions whatever. If Jehoiachin hoped to soften the heart of the conqueror by this display of humbleness, he was speedily undeceived. Nebuchadnezzar, having pillaged the Temple, returned to Babylon, taking with him the Jewish king, his mother, his wives, the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, the king's personal attendants, the chief military men and nobles, a large number of artificers, and all who were most apt for war. The captives (among whom was the prophet Ezekiel) numbered at least ten thousand: indeed, the total must have been more, if we are to accept as literally accurate the statement in the Second Book of Kings, that "none remained save the poorest sort of the people of the land." Jehoiachin was treated with great harshness by the victor. He was kept in prison until the end of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, thirty-seven or thirty-eight years later, and during the whole of that time was clad in prison garments, like a criminal. When, however, Evil Merodach succeeded to the throne of Babylon, Jehoiachin was released, and treated with singular kindness and honour. By some he is regarded as the husband of Susanna in the apocryphal history of Susanna and the Elders; and it is at least probable that he was the cherished companion of Evil Merodach. The end of his life is unknown; but its close was apparently happier than its beginning. The reign of this prince did not last more than three months and ten days, and was comprised within the year 599 or 598 B.C.

Having deposed Jehoiachin, Nebuchadnezzar conferred the royal dignity on a youth who seems to have been brother to the fallen monarch, though the relationship is variously stated in different parts of the Old Testament. His original name was Mattaniah; but this was altered by the conqueror to Zedekiah, as that of Eliakim had been changed by Necho to Jehoiakim. At twenty-one years of age, the new King of Judah succeeded to a most difficult position. The country was in no state to defy the might of Babylon; yet it was impossible not to recognize in some degree the national feeling which was still powerful among the remnant of the Jewish people. Syria was beginning to stir uneasily beneath the Babylonian yoke, and the small kingdoms of Tyre, Sidon, Edom,

and Moab, sent ambassadors to the court of Zedekiah in the fourth year of his reign, to consult with him on matters of foreign policy. Ultimately, the Jewish king formed an alliance with Egypt—an act which could not but be regarded by Nebuchadnezzar as a declaration of hostility against himself. A Babylonian invasion of Judæa followed about the year 590 B.C., and the country was desolated and reduced, with the exception of Jerusalem, and two strong places in the western plain — Lachish and Azekah. After awhile, the King of Egypt advanced to the relief of his Jewish ally, and the Babylonians found it necessary to raise the siege of Jerusalem. They marched to encounter the army of Pharaoh-Hophra (Apries), and it would seem were victorious, for at a later date they were again in front of Zedekiah's capital. The siege was now pressed with unremitting closeness. All hope of external succour was at an end. Without was a hostile army, provided with every means of success; within were dissension and dismay. Jeremiah had always been opposed to his sovereign's defiance of Nebuchadnezzar; but the aristocratical statesmen of Jerusalem were in favour of a policy of independence. The life of the prophet would, indeed, have been sacrificed, but for the protection of the king. Persisting, however, in his warnings and denunciations, he was thrown into gaol on a charge of treasonable correspondence with the enemy; and, although afterwards delivered, by the order of Zedekiah, from the noisome dungeon into which he had been let down, he still remained in the court of the prison, an object of suspicion and dislike.

The situation of Jerusalem was most serious, and it continued to get worse as week after week passed by, without any help arriving from Egypt. By the middle of 586 B.C. (such appears to be the most probable date), it was evident that the end could not be long delayed. The walls were crumbling from the effects of the Babylonian engines. Hunger was beginning to seize the people, for the supply of bread had run out. The miserable citizens were driven to desperate resources; but at length even these were exhausted. Pestilence had followed in the wake of famine, and the deaths were numerous. Josephus has left a narrative of the siege, which supplies us with some details.* The investment had lasted eighteen months from the period of its resumption.

THE SEPULCHRES OF THE KINGS AT JERUSALEM.

* Antiquities of the Jews, Book X., chap. 8.

The Babylonian generals had erected towers upon great mounds of earth, from which they were enabled to operate against the Jewish garrison on the walls. Showers of darts were rained on the defenders, and, although they replied with spirit, nothing could avail against the exhaustion of their guarded, and were probably asleep in their own quarters. News of the catastrophe, however, speedily reached Zedekiah, who, gathering about him his wives and children, his captains and friends, fled by way of the fortified ditch, and so issued forth by a gate close to the royal gardens

THE FLIGHT OF ZEDEKIAH

food, and the presence of disease. In the course of July, a breach was effected in the external walls, and the victorious Babylonians poured into the city. It was midnight: the moon, nine days old (for it was the ninth day of the month, and the Jewish month was lunar), had sunk too low to throw any light into the narrow lanes of the city; and everything was in darkness as the besiegers rushed through the gap in the fortifications. The garrison would seem to have left the walls un- and the Pool of Siloam. This brought them out on to the plains of Jericho, in a direction contrary to that by which the Babylonians had entered.

The invaders had by that time penetrated to the middle of the city, and occupied the Temple, which had never before been entered by a hostile force. In the waning hours of the night, the vanquished monarch and his companions made their way towards the Jordan, but were recognised by some renegade Jews who had deserted to the enemy.

Information of Zedekiah's flight was by these traitors conveyed to the Babylonian commander, who speedily followed in pursuit. The fugitives were overtaken near Jericho, and the king was deserted by all but a few adherents. He was seized, and, together with his sons, despatched to Riblah, where Nebuchadnezzar was then staying, for he had not conducted the siege of Jerusalem in person. Riblah is about ten days' journey north of the Jewish capital; and those ten days were a weary preparation to a dismal tragedy. Nebuchadnezzar ordered the sons and friends of Zedekiah to be killed in his sight, and then, putting out the eyes of the royal captive, carried him in chains to Babylon, where he died at some unknown date. The kingdom of Judah was now at an end. The Temple was once more plundered of its treasures, and committed to the flames. Jerusalem itself was burnt, with the exception of the humbler parts, and the great majority of the people of Judæa were transported to Babylonia, leaving only a small remnant of the poorest orders to cultivate the land. The Hebrew nation was almost entirely dispersed by these frequent removals, which seem, indeed, to have been even more numerous than can be definitely fixed, or associated with any given year.

Resolving to rule Judæa as a conquered province, Nebuchadnezzar appointed one Gedaliah, a Jew, as the governor. Under his immediate protection dwelt Jeremiah, whose services were gratefully remembered. The prophet was found at Ramah among the prisoners who had been put in fetters for transportation to Babylon; and Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard in the invading army, set him at liberty, offering at the same time to promote his interests if he would accompany the rest, but leaving him free to go wherever he liked. He preferred to remain in his own country, and was sent to Gedaliah at Mizpah, with "victuals and a reward."* Nebuchadnezzar slew the chief priest and the second priest of the Temple, and sent the others into captivity. A few weeks after the departure of Nebuchadnezzar, Ishmael, a scion of the royal house, treacherously murdered Gedaliah and others at a feast, and, after keeping his crime secret for some days, made off for the country of the Ammonites with several prisoners, but was pursued, and forced to give them up. Johanan, a Jewish captain who succeeded to some sort of power, fled into Egypt with many of the people, including Jeremiah and his friend Baruch; and the remaining inhabitants of Judæa, with the exception of a few stragglers, were removed to Babylon. Thenceforward, for about half-a-century, Judæa lay waste and desolate. The narrative of the restoration of the Hebrews to their former home belongs to another stage of history.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE MEDIAN AND LYDIAN SOVEREIGNTIES.

Ancient Media and its Boundaries—Ecbatana, the Median Capital—Composition of the Median Population—Relations of Media to Assyria—Legendary History of the Country—Cyaxares the real Founder of the Median State—Prolonged Contest with Scythians—Geography of Asia Minor—Rise of the Lydian Monarchy—Early Legends—Invasion of Lydia by the Cimmerians—War between Media and Lydia—The Eclipse of Thales—The Mausoleum of Alyattes—Defeat of Crœsus, King of Lydia, by Cyrus the Persian—Reign of Astyages, the last King of Media—Absorption of the Median in the Persian Empire—General Character of the Medes, and their Civilisation.

In tracing the history of the Assyrian Empire, we are often confronted by an energetic race, which, under the title of Medes, gave a good deal of trouble to the great monarchs of Nineveh. Partial subjugations of this nationality were frequent; but it is doubtful whether a complete conquest was at any time effected. Media had an important future before it, and its situation conduced to its independence. The mountain-chain of Zagros (now included in Kurdistan) protected it from the full exercise of Assyrian power, and the neighbourhood of large open spaces afforded its inhabitants sufficient opportunity of spreading without restriction. As far as can be ascertained, Media was bounded on the west by Assyria; on the north by the river Araxes, which parted it from Armenia; on the east by the Caspian Sea, by the mountains called after that body of waters, and by the great desert

* Jeremiah, xl. 5.

of Iran; and on the south by Persia and Susiana. In the present day it is represented by the Persian province of Irak Ajami, by parts of Kurdistan and Luristan, and by Azerbijan and some adjacent regions. The last-mentioned of these divisions, comprising the lands which bordered on the Araxes, was perhaps not included in the Media of Herodotus; but at a later age of classical antiquity it was undoubtedly embraced under that name. This is the finest portion of the country, and consists of an elevated region, enclosed by the offshoots of the Armenian mountains which surround the basin of Lake Urumiyeh.

The greater part of Media is intersected by mountain-ranges, the valleys of which are fertile and productive. Tabriz, the summer residence of the Persian Shahs, is situated among the mountains of Azerbijan; but this is a comparatively modern town, having, it is thought, been founded by the wife of the celebrated Caliph, Haroun-al-Raschid, in the eighth century of our era. The chief city of ancient Media was Ecbatana, which was to the former kings of Persia what Tabriz is to their successors. The name signifies a treasure-city, and it was given to several towns. Indeed, it seems probable that there were two Ecbatanas in Media itself: one in the lower country, or Media Magna; the other in the northern mountains of Media Atropatêne, now called Azerbijan.* The city described by Herodotus appears to have been the latter, the site of which is believed by recent inquirers to be indicated by some remarkable ruins at Takht-i-Suleïman. Various references to Ecbatana occur in the apocryphal writings of the Hebrews; and it is possible that sometimes the one metropolis is intended, and sometimes the other. But it is chiefly from Greek authors that our ideas of this splendid city are derived; and it is now generally supposed that the Ecbatana of Herodotus was, as we have said, the northern capital, and not, as formerly assumed, the one occupying the place of Hamadan. The two sites, however, are not very far apart, and it is perhaps impossible to decide with absolute certainty between the rival claims.

In any case, Ecbatana was a city of singular magnificence. Herodotus says that the walls were of great size and strength, rising in circles one within another. Each of these walls was raised above the one beyond it by the height of the battlements only—an arrangement which was facilitated by the sloping ground on which the city was built. The number of the circles was seven, and the king's palace and treasuries were situated within the last. The battlements of the first circle were white; of the second, black; of the third, purple; of the fourth, blue; of the fifth, bright red, or orange. All these were coloured with paint; but the battlements of the two last circles were coated respectively with silver and with gold. These walls, however, were simply defences to the royal structures: the people were required to erect their dwellings outside the circuit.† The varying colours of the battlements, and the introduction of gold and silver, will remind the reader of the Temple of the Seven Spheres at Borsippa, near Babylon, of which some account has been given in an earlier Chapter. Mystical ideas, having reference to astronomical influences, were undoubtedly embodied in this mode of ornamentation, which was to be seen in many places, and is even said to exist at the present day in Chinese and Indian towns. Polybius (who, however, may have been describing the southern city) records that Ecbatana was not merely of vast strength, but of extraordinary splendour. The only woods used in the royal palace were cedar and cypress, and the building was wholly covered with plates of gold and silver, which, according to Polybius, were carried away by the soldiers of Alexander the Great, Antigonus, and Seleucus. Modern writers are sometimes too ready to assume that these amazing relations are fictitious, or at least greatly heightened. The sumptuousness and extravagance of ancient monarchs, who had large stores of the precious metals at command, who could employ the forced labour of enslaved populations, and whose power to extort contributions from their subjects was almost without limit, were far beyond anything of which we have now an example.

The earliest account of the northern Ecbatana, however, does not depict such splendours, which probably came at a later period. It is stated in the Zendavesta, with reference to this city, that "Jemshid erected a *Var*, or fortress, sufficiently large, and formed of squared blocks of stone. He assembled in the place a vast population, and stocked the surrounding country with cattle for their use. He caused the water of the great fortress to flow forth abundantly; and within the fortress he erected a lofty palace, encompassed with walls, and laid it out in many separate divisions; and there was no place, either in front or rear, to command and overawe the fortress."‡ The northern

* This opinion was first advanced by Colonel Rawlinson, several years ago.

† Herodotus, I. 98, 9.

‡ Quoted by Professor Rawlinson in Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, Art. "Ecbatana."

city continued to be a place of importance down to the close of the twelfth Christian century, when it was greatly injured by the conquests of the Moguls. Its final ruin, however, did not occur until the fifteenth or sixteenth century; since which time it has existed only in ruins. The southern city, which was occupied by Alexander the Great after the battle of Arbela, suffered largely in subsequent wars, and was made by the Parthians the capital of their dominions. In later ages it was overshadowed by Baghdad and Ispahan, but is even now, under the name of Hamadan, a well-peopled and prosperous town.

The original population of Media was Turanian. The Turanians were afterwards superseded, either wholly or in part, by an offshoot from that race which the Bible calls Japhetic, but which in the modern science of ethnology is described as Aryan. It may here be sufficient to say that the Turanians were a very primitive race, whose modern descendants are to be seen in the Chinese, Japanese, and other Mongolian nationalities; and that the Aryans were a great division of the human family, from which most of the European peoples, and some of those in Western and Central Asia, are derived. In the Medes known to authentic history, the amount of Turanian blood must have been small. They were in the main an old Aryan stock, and were indeed called Aryans until they acquired the distinctive name of Medes. According to Berosus, eight Median monarchs reigned in Babylon from 2458 to 2234 B.C. These Medians were probably a mixed Aryan and Turanian race, dwelling in the Mesopotamian valley; and it may be that, on being expelled from Chaldæa, after their dominion of two hundred and twenty-four years, they retreated in a north-easterly direction to the mountains in and around Media, from which it would seem they had originally issued. In later ages, the Medes became progressively more Aryan, and less Turanian; and they introduce a new element into the great currents of the world's history. The Medes and Persians were essentially the same race. Their manners, laws, costumes, and probably language, were similar, and it was by a natural cohesion that in process of time they became one. The meaning of the word "Aryan" is by some supposed to be indicative of nobility, or superiority—a signification which has been abundantly borne out by the great European nations descending from the original stock, as well as by the Persians and Hindoos. Hitherto we have been concerned only with the Semitic and Hamitic races—with the Jews and the Assyrians, with the Egyptians and the Chaldees. The narrative now enters on a stage which conducts us into Europe. We are not, indeed, even yet delivered from the shadow of those enormous military despotisms which constitute so large a portion of the evil splendour of the East. But from the mountains of Media comes a breeze of hardy enterprise, which carries with it a prophecy of freedom; and beyond the Imperial bulk of Persia rises the dawn of Greece.

When the power of Assyria was at its height, the Medes consisted of a number of tribes, distributed among several small towns and villages, which were bound together by no common government, but were administered by chieftains, whose functions were doubtless not very dissimilar from those of an Arab Sheikh. To these scattered communities, the vast military power of the Assyrians proved a formidable danger. Their country was frequently subdued, and tribute was exacted from the people; but the Great Kings were never able to establish their authority over the resolute and sturdy mountaineers. The first allusion to the Medes in the cuneiform inscriptions occurs on the Black Obelisk of Nimroud, recording the achievements of Shalmaneser II. about the middle of the ninth century B.C. From that time onward they are frequently mentioned, but always in a way which indicates that, to obtain tribute from them at all, it was necessary to harass their territories with repeated expeditions. The nearest approach to an actual conquest was during the reign of Sargon, who, towards the end of the eighth century B.C., founded cities in Media, which he peopled with Israelitish captives from Samaria. Yet even this subjugation was only temporary, and at the best was probably incomplete. Subsequent rulers of Assyria undertook the same enterprise over again, and the Medes, though generally worsted in the open field, contrived to maintain their separate existence from age to age. They were made, however, to furnish large recruits to the Assyrian armies, and were among the most valuable soldiers in the ranks of the Great King.

At what period Media delivered itself from a condition of precarious independence, and passed into a more assured political state, it is impossible to affirm with any certainty. Herodotus says that the Medes revolted from the Assyrians at an epoch which, according to modern computation, would be a little before 708 B.C.; but in all probability it was not so early as this. At whatever time it occurred, however, the revolt was followed by a period of anarchy, or at least of no settled government. The necessity of a greater

concentration of power becoming at length apparent, the people, as Herodotus reports,* chose a king named Deioces, who reigned fifty-three years. To him succeeded his son Phraortes, who, possessing a military genius, conquered several neighbouring countries, and ultimately died in an expedition against Assyria, after a reign of two-and-twenty years. Cyaxares, the son of Phraortes, was the next king of Media. He was engaged, throughout a large part of his reign, in a struggle with the Scythians of Eastern Europe, which lasted twenty-eight years, and resulted in Cyaxares recovering the whole of his kingdom, a considerable portion of which had been taken from him by his enemies. Thus delivered from external pressure, the Median king resumed a career of conquest which these events had interrupted, and conducted a campaign during which (according to Herodotus) he subdued the greater part of Assyria, and took the city of Nineveh. He died after a reign of forty years, and was succeeded by Astyages, whose daughter Mandane, being married to the Persian Cambyses, became the mother of the famous Cyrus.

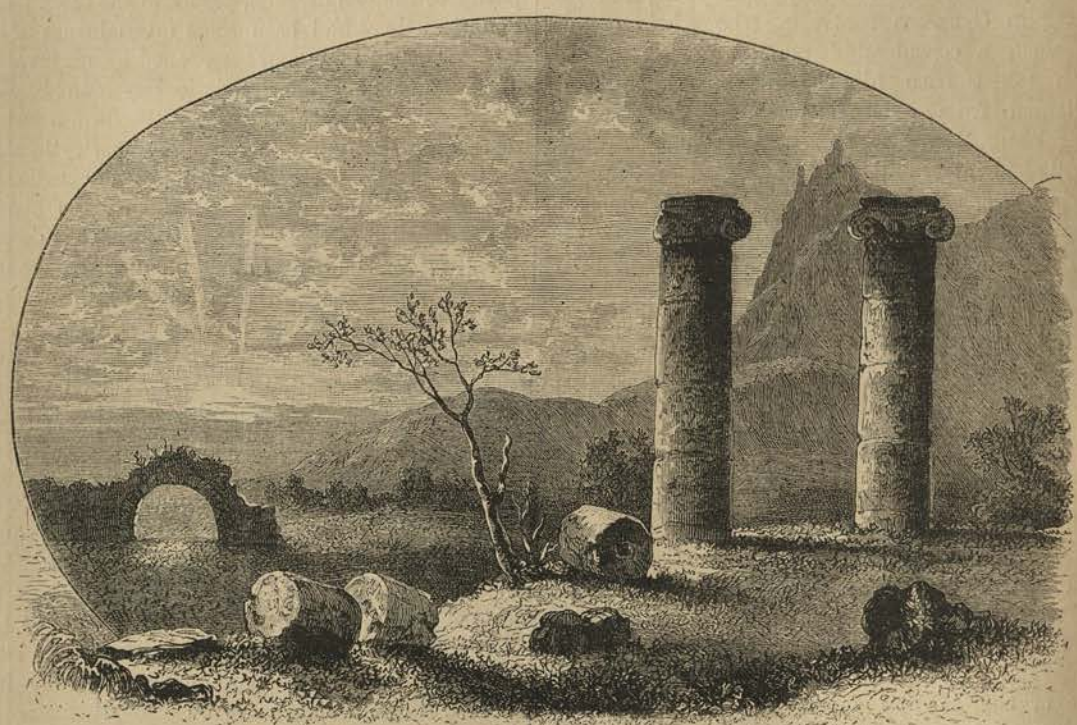
It is not worth while to give these Median legends in any greater detail, because, although until recently they have been accepted as veritable records, it is now generally believed that, with the exception of some leading facts, little value is to be attached to them. From the cuneiform inscriptions of Sargon, Sennacherib, and Esar-haddon, it appears that, at the period to which Herodotus assigns the commencement of the Median kingdom, the country was really under the sway of numerous petty chieftains. The rise of the Median sovereignty is now dated a little past the middle of the seventh century B.C., and it is believed that the Deioces and Phraortes of Herodotus are not historical characters at all. The probability is that a fresh immigration of Aryan tribes into Media took place a little before the destruction of the Assyrian power, and that the leader of this expedition was Cyaxares, who, at length establishing his supremacy over the broken communities of the land, about 634 B.C., was the real founder of the monarchy. That he was unable to accomplish his designs without first subduing the Scythians who threatened him from the north, may be readily allowed. It is also not unlikely that he conquered Assyria, or assisted in its conquest; for the great empire was now in its decline. The predominance of the Medes had advanced as that of the Assyrians receded, and the capture of Nineveh, mentioned by Herodotus among the achievements of Cyaxares, was doubtless the catastrophe which brought the Assyrian realm to an end. This, as the reader is aware, is generally referred to the year 625 B.C., though other dates have been suggested.

The opinion of modern inquirers is that the establishment of the Median kingdom marks the period of a great struggle between the Turanian and Aryan races. For many generations up to that time, the population of Media had belonged partly to the one division, partly to the other; and doubtless there had been some intermixture of the two. The land was now threatened by an invasion of Turanians belonging to the Scythian branch, whose numbers were so great as to form a serious danger on that ground alone. These Scythians—natives of the north, fierce, hungry, nomadic, the ancestors of modern tribes which have always been impelled to break out of their savage deserts like a storm suddenly falling upon more favoured regions—were continually pressing southward and westward from lands beyond the Caspian, or from other distant parts, where they lived precarious lives. Being a race much inferior to the Semites, the Hamites, and the Aryans, their inroads, if unchecked, would have proved a serious, perhaps a fatal, disaster to the growing civilisation of the world.† They were encountered, however, by the Aryans—their equals in courage and physical endurance, their superiors in all else. Cyaxares, as we have said, was the captain of the great Aryan body of warriors and settlers, who, apparently proceeding from some more eastern part of Asia, made their way into Media, and ultimately drove the Scythians across Mount Zagros into the empire of the Assyrians, which they helped to shatter. The precise course of events cannot now be ascertained; but it seems probable that Cyaxares had begun his attack on Assyria before the inroad of the Scythians; that he was called off from the siege of Nineveh by the irruption of the northern savages; that he defeated them after an arduous contest of many years' duration; and that the siege of the Assyrian capital was then successfully resumed, in conjunction with the Babylonians. It is said that the

* Book I. of the History, chap. 96 *et seq.*

† Professor Rawlinson (differing in this respect from Niebuhr and most other modern authorities) believes that the European Scyths described by Herodotus in his Fourth Book were not Turanians, but an Indo-European race, now extinct. (Rawlinson's Herodotus, Essay II. appended to Book IV.) The same view is supported by Professor Max Duncker, in his "History of Antiquity," Book IV., chap 11. But the point is one on which no certain answer can be given.

Scythians even penetrated as far south as Israel and Philistia, where their wild and ferocious aspect and extreme barbarity excited terror and loathing; and that they would have entered Egypt, had not Psammetichus bought them off. But what we chiefly know concerning the Scythians of this date is that Cyaxares defeated their assault on Media. Great ability as a military organiser seems to have been shown by this prince, who divided his forces into cavalry, archers, and spearmen. He extended his conquests across the highlands



RUINS OF THE TEMPLE OF CYBELE AT SARDIS.

of southern Armenia, and penetrated westward into Asia Minor as far as the river Halys.

In the interesting region thus designated, a State had by this time arisen, with which Cyaxares came into hostile contact, and which now demands our attention. The country formerly known as Asia Minor, and more recently as Anatolia, is a peninsula in the western part of the great continent with which it is associated, about seven hundred and fifty miles in length, by four hundred in breadth; bordered by the sea on every side except the east, and separated from Europe by but narrow waters. The eastern boundary touches on Upper Mesopotamia and Armenia; in all other directions, the sea offers to its people the most admirable opportunities of colonisation and of commerce. Between the western coast of this territory and the mainland of Greece, the Ægean is dotted over with small islands, which may almost be said to unite the continents of Asia and Europe. To the south, the Mediterranean gives access to Cyprus, to Phœnicia, and to Egypt. In the opposite direction, the Propontis leads through the Bosphorus into the broader spaces of the Euxine, which forms the main limit in that direction, and which in ancient times provided a natural barrier against the barbarous people still farther north.

The geographical position of Asia Minor placed it, so to speak, in the very high-road of those great movements of population by which Asia has operated on Europe, and Europe on Asia. It has consequently happened that, from an early period down to the present day, the people of this land have been extremely mixed. Speaking broadly, however, the ancient inhabitants to the east of the river Halys (which partially divides the peninsula into two unequal halves) were mainly of Semitic origin—the nations to the west, principally Aryan; while the Pamphylians and Cilicians of the southern coast, who were divided from the others by the mountain-chain of Taurus, were Semites, qualified by an Hamitic infusion.

The Aryan populations west of the Halys were

CYRUS AND CRŒSUS. (*See p.* 208.)

apparently related to the Thracians of Europe, and to those Pelasgian wanderers who formed the primitive element in the Greek and Italian races. At a very remote period of time—so remote that history is lost in tradition, and tradition passes into poetic legend—several small kingdoms were established in the country lying between the Halys and the Ægean. Paphlagonia, Bithynia, Mysia, Phrygia, Caria, and Lydia, are names well known to ancient history; and of these communities the most important was the Lydian. The Lydian territory was watered by three principal rivers—the Hermus, the Cayster, and the Mæander—and was divided into a number of fertile valleys, beneath the soil of which were mineral riches in the greatest prodigality. The Greeks, who sent colonies into nearly all parts of Asia Minor, affirmed that the Lydians were the first people who coined gold and silver money, and carried on retail trade. The mines of Pergamus were celebrated, and the Pactolus was said to run over sands of gold. These sources of wealth increased the power, and helped to develop the civilisation, of Lydia, which soon attracted the attention of surrounding States. But the early kings of the country are plainly mythical, being manifestly compounded, at some later date, out of Greek and Asiatic legends.

One of the early dynasties of Lydia was that of the Heraclidæ (descendants of Hercules), the last king of which line was Candaules, whose story is related by Herodotus in his First Book. Briefly related, the narrative is to the effect that the wife of Candaules, being incensed against her husband by an act of dishonour to herself, incited one Gyges to murder him, and that Gyges in this way succeeded to the throne, and to the possession of the queen as his spouse. Plato has told the same story with some marvellous and romantic additions, setting forth that Gyges, who was originally a simple herdsman in the service of the king, found within a cavern, on the finger of a buried giant, a ring which made him invisible, and facilitated his designs on Candaules.* Setting aside these fictions —which, however, are too characteristic of the meeting of Greek and Oriental tradition to be altogether passed over—we come to the probability that, under the title of the Mermnadæ, a new Lydian dynasty was established by Gyges, who soon afterwards found himself seriously opposed by adherents of the fallen line. Civil war might perhaps have followed, but for a convenient sentence of the Delphic Oracle, which had already acquired a great reputation throughout the Hellenic and semi-Hellenic world, and which pronounced in favour of Gyges. The Mermnadæ were always very liberal in their gifts to the shrine at Delphos, and it may be that their generosity procured the favourable response of the Oracle. The reign of Gyges is thought by Mr. Clinton to have extended from 716 to 678 B.C. Professor Rawlinson, however, fixes the respective epochs eight years earlier —viz., at 724 and 686 B.C.

The successors of Gyges, belonging to the same dynasty, were Ardys, Sadyattes, Alyattes, and Crœsus. These were all warlike monarchs, and the small kingdom of Lydia was gradually extended, in a westerly direction, to the shores of the Ægean, and, in an easterly, to the line of the Halys. But the Lydians, even in this flourishing period of their history, were subject to the usual trials of early communities. While Ardys, the second of the Mermnadæ, occupied the throne of Lydia, Asia Minor was invaded by certain tribes from those wild and unexplored lands beyond the Euxine, which are now known as the Ukraine, in the south of European Russia. The Cimmerii were a people not very distinctly understood by the civilised nations of antiquity, and concerning whom there has been much dispute among modern scholars. Homer speaks of the Cimmerians as a race dwelling on the farthest shores of the great ocean-stream, immersed in perpetual darkness, and occupying a position next to the cloudy empire of the shades. This ocean-stream, in the opinion of the ancient Greeks, flowed round the earth and its seas, ebbing and flowing thrice in the course of a single day. We have here, it is true, no exact indication of the locality in which the Greeks believed the land of the Cimmerians to be situated; but it seems probable, from the state of geographical knowledge in the time of Homer, that the poet intended some country north of the Euxine. Æschylus places Cimmeria in the vicinity of the Palus Mæotis, the modern Sea of Azov; and the narrow passage leading out of the Euxine into that smaller body of waters was called in the ancient world the Cimmerian Bosphorus. We read in Herodotus of a Cimmerian ferry; and of certain Cimmerian forts or castles, all of which seem to have been in this region. The name occurs in various other ancient writers, and relics of it may still be traced in Eski-Crim (Old Crim, or the ancient Cimmerium), and in the Crimea. The seats of these obscure tribes were doubtless on the northern shores of the Euxine and the Palus Mæotis, whence they frequently poured down upon the nations to the south, sometimes crossing the Ister, or Danube, and the Thracian Bosphorus (now the Straits of Constanti-

* The Republic, Book II., chap. 3.

nople), and thus finding their way into the fertile territories of Asia Minor, which they devastated in their savage fury. Though not absolutely certain, it is likely that the Cimmerians were the same people as the Cymry, or Cimbri, a branch of the Celtic stock from which the primitive inhabitants of Gaul, Britain, and Ireland are derived, and apparently the very branch whence come the people of Wales, who in fact call themselves Cymry to this day.

Wild and barbarous as they were, the Cimmerians formed a vigorous nationality, with a distinctive character, and with qualities which showed in them the capacity of future civilisation. Nevertheless, they were driven from their ancient seats, during the second half of the seventh century B.C., by the still more powerful, or perhaps simply more numerous, hordes of the Scythians, who, crossing from the eastern side of the Tanais, or Don (where they had themselves been disturbed by other nationalities), fell upon them with unexpected vehemence. The majority of the expelled population retreated westward, and, entering the central and western countries of Europe, dispossessed the thinly-scattered Turanian communities which they found there, and which, receding into the northern parts of the continent, formed the nationalities of the Finns, Esthonians, and Lapps. With the Cimmerians, who thus established themselves in some of the best European lands, we are not at present concerned. Our attention is demanded by that section of the race which, in the reign of the Lydian king Ardys, overspread Asia Minor like a deluge. The tribes moving in this direction passed round the eastern shores of the Euxine on the western side of the Caucasus, and so entered Lesser Asia by the small States of Colchis and Pontus, about the same time that the Scythians, shaping their course along the eastern flank of the great mountain-wall, descended on Media, and for a time checked the growing fortunes of Cyaxares. Although unable to cope with the Scythians, the Cimmerii proved very formidable enemies to the people of Asia Minor. They penetrated as far south as the range of Mount Taurus, but were there beaten back with immense slaughter by the Cilicians. In Ionia and Lydia, however, they committed fearful havoc. The great Temple of Diana at Ephesus, in the former of those countries, they burnt to the ground; and Sardis, the capital of Lydia, was destroyed, with the exception of the citadel. After awhile, the invasion spent itself, and its permanent results were but slight. It began to decline during the reign of Sadyattes, the son of Ardys, and the Cimmerians were finally expelled under that of Alyattes, towards the middle of the sixth century B.C., leaving behind them a few colonies, of which the principal was that of Sinope, on the Euxine.

It was during the reign of Alyattes that Lydia came into collision with the Median sovereign, Cyaxares. A number of defeated Scythians, who had been treated with great severity by the latter monarch, sought refuge in the Lydian dominions. Cyaxares required that they should be delivered up to him, and, on being refused, carried war into the territory of his neighbour. For nearly six years this war continued without any decisive result, and was then brought to a close by a circumstance which both nations regarded as miraculous, though it appears to have been nothing more than an eclipse of the sun. In the midst of an engagement, according to Herodotus, day was suddenly turned into night. This extraordinary phenomenon (which, however, had been foretold by Thales, the astronomer of Miletus) appeared to both combatants like a manifestation of divine anger. They at once desisted from the conflict, and, showing great anxiety for peace, left the conduct of the negotiations to Labynetus, King of Babylonia, who was with the army of Cyaxares, and Syennetis, King of Cilicia, the ally of Alyattes. The termination of the war was followed by the marriage of Aryênis, daughter of the Lydian monarch, to Astyages, son of the Median prince; and an intimate association between the two countries was thus established. The date of the eclipse cannot be alleged with any certainty. Several years have been propounded, ranging from 625 to 583 B.C.; but it is impossible to regard any one of them as conclusive. If, however, the death of Cyaxares took place in 594 B.C., as is supposed, the eclipse could not have been as late as 583; indeed, the German chronological writer, Ideler, maintains that the event must have occurred in 610.

Alyattes appears to have died in 568 or 560 B.C., and the expulsion of the Cimmerii is believed to have been near the latter end of his reign. As they entered Asia Minor in the reign of Ardys, they must have remained there the greater part of a century, and it is singular that their presence in that quarter of the world should have produced so slight an effect. The later years of Alyattes were employed in wars with the Grecian colonies of Lesser Asia, when his arms were successful against the Milesians. The tomb of Alyattes, of which some indications are still to be seen about five miles from Sardis, or Sart, is characterised by Herodotus as the only remarkable structure

raised by the Lydian kings, but as being so grand in its proportions that it was surpassed only by the works of the Egyptians and Babylonians. The basis was composed of immense stones; the rest was a mound of earth, surmounted by five stone pillars, with inscriptions showing how much the several classes of the kingdom had contributed towards the structure. The form was circular, or nearly so, and the circumference in the time of Herodotus was almost three-quarters of a mile. At the present day, the circumference of what remains is not more than half a mile. The monument appears to have had, in some respects, the character of those barrows which the nations of north-western Europe used in early times to erect over the dead bodies of chiefs and heroes. It likewise resembled the ancient tombs found in Etruria and Greece. Almost in the centre of the tumulus (which still rises up like a natural hill out of the flat and marshy lands) is a sepulchral chamber, discovered some years ago by the Prussian consul at Smyrna. The dimensions of the concavity are eleven feet in length, a little less than eight feet in breadth, and seven feet in height. The walls are composed of large blocks of white marble, highly polished; but the chamber contains no sarcophagus. This, however, may have been removed in some later age, for the mound has evidently been rifled. Near the mausoleum is a lake, which the people told Herodotus was fed by perpetual springs.

The successor to Alyattes was his son Crœsus, the greatest, and the last, of the Mermnadæ. He was thirty-five years of age when his father died, and it is probable that he had for some time been associated in the government of the kingdom. Following a warlike policy as soon as he had become completely his own master, he conquered all the Ionians and Æolians of Asia Minor, together with the other nations west of the Halys. The power of Lydia thus became greater than it had ever been before; but the rapid growth of Persia (whose history we shall have next to trace) excited so much uneasiness in the mind of Crœsus that, after consulting several oracles in Europe, Asia, and Africa, he concluded alliances with Amasis, King of Egypt, with the ruler of Babylon, and with the Lacedæmonians, about 554 B.C. Thus strengthened, he overran the country of the Cappadocian Syrians beyond the Halys, and shortly afterwards attacked his great rival, Cyrus the Persian, whom he hoped to crush. The result of the conflict was wholly indecisive, and Crœsus returned to Sardis, with the intention of renewing the war in the following year. Cyrus, however, did not wait to be assailed, but, crossing the Halys, marched rapidly towards the Lydian capital, and, defeating his adversary's forces before any of the allies of Lydia could reach the scene of action, though not without a desperate and prolonged resistance, took Sardis in 546 B.C. The capture of the city was owing to a singular and striking accident. Sardis was flanked on one side by a steep rock, which was believed to be unscalable. A Persian soldier, however, perceived a Lydian, who had dropped his helmet, descend by a steep path, and afterwards regain the citadel. Thus instructed, the Persians stormed the heights where they were weakly guarded, and burst in the town.

Crœsus was sentenced to be burnt alive, and it is said that the flames had actually been kindled when Cyrus relented, and spared his vanquished enemy. The story, as told by Herodotus, is very dramatic. According to this narrative, some words of Solon, the Athenian law-giver, were remembered by Crœsus in the moment of his supreme agony. Solon had warned him that no living man could be accounted happy; and as the sentence recurred to his mind, he thrice uttered the name of his friend with a deep groan. On the fact being reported to Cyrus, together with the reason of the exclamation, he ordered the flames to be quenched; but this was now found to be impossible, and Crœsus, in the Herodotean legend, was saved from destruction only by the miraculous interposition of Apollo.*

The account of Crœsus in the pages of Herodotus is evidently mixed up with a good deal of fable, and coloured with a strong Greek feeling. His aggressions on the Greek colonies of Asia Minor were regarded by the Halicarnassian as an offence for which his misfortunes were the punishment; and, in pursuance of this idea, he was represented as the victim of one of those double-tongued oracular responses which the Pagans delighted to impute to their deities. Previous to his attack on Cyrus, the oracle told Crœsus that, if he crossed the Halys, he would overthrow a mighty empire. This he accepted as an encouragement; but, in the opinion of the pious, the event showed that the empire intended was his own. Legends form part of the very life of ancient history; but, while they ought not to be omitted, we should take care to keep them apart from what is obviously or probably true. It is doubtful whether Crœsus had any personal acquaintance with Solon; and the whole story of the pyre, and of the incident which saved the Lydian monarch from death, has—even

* Herodotus, I. 86, 7.

apart from the supernatural element—too much the appearance of a moral fable to be accepted as genuine history. That Cyrus in the first instance treated his vanquished enemy with harshness, and afterwards relaxed the stringency of his edicts, is, however, very likely. The capture of Sardis put an end to the Lydian kingdom, and Crœsus thenceforward accompanied the Persian sovereign on his expeditions, in the capacity of a friend and adviser. When Cyrus was on the point of death, he recommended the fallen king to his son Cambyses as an experienced guide; but the latter did not long continue his good will. He was on one occasion so greatly enraged with Crœsus, for having reproved him for wanton cruelty, that he attempted his life. The Lydian escaped, and from that time forth disappears from view. The proverbial riches of Crœsus have doubtless some relation to fact; but the story of the dumb son, who, seeing a Persian at the capture of Sardis about to kill his father, exclaimed, "Soldier, spare the king!" is obviously mythical.

The Median Empire came to a close in 558 B.C., when Astyages, the last of the native kings, was dethroned by Cyrus the Persian, after a reign of thirty-five years. He is said to have made war with Armenia; but the narrative is thought to be fictitious, or at most to have but a slight foundation of truth. Of his character and modes of government, very contradictory accounts are given. It is probable, however, that he followed a pacific policy, and was fortunate in his life until towards the close. In one direction he gave some little extension to the bounds of his kingdom. The members of a warlike tribe, called the Cadusians, occupied a tract of low-lying country on the north-eastern frontier of Media, and had preserved their independence up to the reign of Astyages. They were then under the government of a chief named Aphernes, or Onaphernes, who, doubting whether he could maintain his position against a powerful neighbour, offered to surrender his territory into the hands of the Median prince. A secret treaty was thereupon concluded, and, although some resistance on the part of the people was apprehended, the transfer was carried out in a peaceful manner. The events which occasioned the downfall of Astyages, and the incorporation of the Median in the Persian dominions, must be included in the history of the latter.

The existence of the Median Empire was remarkably short. It lasted, in fact, scarcely a hundred years, and must therefore be regarded as little more than an episode in the history of the more enduring monarchies of Chaldæa, Assyria, and Persia. Yet the Medes were a vigorous, manly, and energetic race, who had furnished some of the best elements to the Assyrian power, and were now to form no mean portion of the new kingdom's strength. They are said to have been the originators of those customs and national characteristics which were common to Media, Assyria, and Persia; and, as far as Persia was concerned, this was doubtless the case. Their religion was the system of Theism which is contained in the most ancient parts of the Zendavesta, and of which we shall have occasion to speak further on; but it appears to have been largely qualified, and perhaps in some places superseded, by Magism, or fire-worship, which prevailed among the people of Armenia and Mount Zagros. As soldiers, the Medes were undoubtedly excellent: their proficiency in riding is mentioned by ancient authors, and they were unusually skilful with the bow. Nothing could exceed their courage and determination in battle; but, unfortunately, their cruelty in the hour of conquest was equal to their valour in the field. A certain pertinacity of character is revealed in the strong spirit of conservatism which marked their political habits: Daniel speaks of "the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not." The simplicity of their early manners, however, was corrupted with singular quickness when they became the masters of an extensive empire. They adopted luxurious habits of living from the Assyrians, clothed themselves in splendid garments, delighted in sumptuous banquets, and adorned their buildings with barbarian pomp. Their cookery was elaborate, and they often drank wine to excess.

In the reign of Astyages, the monarch lived secluded in the midst of his guards and eunuchs. His courtiers wore long flowing robes of various colours, of which red and purple were the favourites, and added to the gallantry of their appearance by chains, collars, and bracelets of gold. The officers of the court were extremely numerous, and formed a kind of hierarchy of service and of privilege. One of these officers, called "the King's Eye," was probably charged with the duty of general supervision; and among the courtiers of the highest rank were persons entitled "the King's table-companions." Hunting was a favourite amusement with these monarchs. On ordinary occasions, the chase was followed in a large park near the capital; but sometimes the sovereign and his courtiers ventured into the open country, where lions, leopards, bears, boars, and other wild animals, were driven by beaters into an enclosed space, and killed with arrows and javelins. The priestly caste of the

Magi enjoyed peculiar honour at court, and the authorised expounders of religion were in constant attendance, to explain omens and dreams, and to assist the king with advice.* Such was the condition of Media in the reign of her last independent king, Astyages. But the conquering zeal of the race had spent itself. Premature languor had settled on a nation of warriors, and a stronger power was rising, to seize the Imperial diadem of Asia.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ANCIENT PERSIA.

General Description of Persia—Origin of the Persian Nationality—Varieties of the Persian Language—The Religion of Dualism: Ormuzd and Ahriman—Introduction of a Qualified Polytheism—Noble Characteristics of the Persian Faith—Magism, the Religion of Fire-worship—The Second Zoroaster, and the Legends of his Life—Death of Zoroaster—Difficulty of determining who this Person was—Combination of Dualism with Magism—The Zendavesta—Herodotus on the Religion of Persia—The Ten Persian Tribes—Character of the Ancient Persians—The Army and its Organisation—Style of Living of the Persian Kings and Nobles—The Oppressions of Despotism.

EASTWARD of the great monarchies of Assyria and Babylonia lies a vast tract of country, which on ethnographical grounds is comprehended under the general name of Iran. It is an immense table-land, of considerable elevation, and surrounded by mountain-ranges which shut it in on all sides from the neighbouring countries and from the sea. Extending from the plains of the Tigris and the Persian Gulf, in the west, to the frontier of India on the east, and from the Caspian Sea and Turkestan, in the north, to the Indian Ocean in the south, it presents many varieties of soil and climate, and from its central position seems well adapted to be the seat of a powerful dominion. This remarkable land is now divided amongst the three sovereignties of Persia, Afghanistan, and Beloochistan; but the whole was included in the Persian Empire which makes so splendid and impressive a figure in the annals of the ancient world. The table-land is generally level, but is broken here and there by low ridges of rock, rising like islands out of the flat expanse. A good deal of fertile soil is to be found along the interior base of the mountains which hem in the whole territory; but the centre is a vast desert—the rainless Desert of Iran—which, sandy in some parts, saline in others, and frequently marshy, presents a dismal and forbidding aspect everywhere, except in those small oases of shade and verdure which lie cradled in the rocky glens. Thus it will be seen that a large part of Iran is sterile; nevertheless, the fertile regions, when taken altogether, are far from inconsiderable.

Some of the best of these tracts are in Persia Proper (the ancient Persis, now called Fars or Farsistan)—a province bordering on the Persian Gulf, in the south-west of the kingdom. The plain of Shiraz, in the northern part of this province, is famous for the wine that is associated with its name. In the beautiful valley of the Bendamir once stood the gorgeous city of Persepolis, the ruins of which are still counted among the grandest relics of the East: the older capital, Pasargadæ, was in a wilder country to the north-west. Travellers and poets have described the loveliness of the wooded dells, green mountain-slopes, and fertile plains, to be found in the favoured divisions of Persia; but the barren regions are unfortunately much more numerous. The whole territory is traversed by a great rocky barrier, prolonging, in a south-easterly direction, the mountain-chain of Zagros. This enormous rampart is pierced in many directions by narrow gorges, which facilitate intercommunication between the various parts of the country. On both sides of the rapid currents rise perpendicular cliffs, along the sides of which the roads are carried in zigzags, sometimes crossing from rock to rock by bridges of a single arch thrown over terrific chasms, in the depths of which the waters foam and roar from one cascade to another, hurrying along their precipitous channels to the distant sea. Most of these roads have been artificially cut in the precipices of the mountainous region; and between the Persian Gulf and the high plateau of Iran, three or four tortuous and difficult gorges are interposed.†

Two other districts celebrated for their beauty

* Rawlinson's Five Great Monarchies of the Ancient Eastern World: Media, chap. 6.

† Rawlinson's Five Great Monarchies; Persia, chap. 1.

are those which in modern times have been called Ghilan and Mazanderan, and which lie beyond the mountain-range skirting the southern shores of the Caspian. These provinces were included in Media; but after the ruin of the kingdom established by Cyaxares, the sway of Persia extended to the

MOUNT ZAGROS

northern sea. The mountains and hills of Ghilan and Mazanderan are magnificently wooded; delightful gardens and orchards give richness to the valleys; the most exquisite fruit grows freely and abundantly; and the vegetation has almost a tropical character, despite the northern situation of the land. But these advantages are not without concomitant evils. Tigers are found in the woods, and frequent marshes in the lower tracts spread disease and death over a large extent of country.

It must, indeed, be admitted that the general character of Iran is wild and threatening, despite the beauty of particular districts; yet the country has supported in former times a large and energetic population, and few parts of the world have illustrated in a more remarkable degree the mutability of fortune and the fluctuations of empire. The state of Persia in our day is one of miserable degradation; but it has again and again risen in splendour out of temporary eclipse, and, notwithstanding some amount of foreign admixture, the race is still mainly the same as that which Cyrus led to victory, and Xerxes to defeat.

The ancient Persians belonged to the great Aryan division of the human family. They were consequently related to the Medes, and shared the

traditions and the religious systems of their kinsmen. It appears to be generally admitted that the Aryans originated east of the Indus, and were identical with the Indo-European race from which most nationalities of the north-west are derived. The first seat of the Persians as a distinct community was in the province of Persia Proper, whence they spread over the surrounding lands. The name of the race—"Parsee"—is believed to signify "tiger:" the word "Iran" has doubtless a close analogy with "Aryan." In the speech of the ancient Persians, philologists find considerable resemblance to some of the dialects of India, and also to the languages of modern Europe. The most ancient form of the Persian tongue is that called the Zend—a near relation to the Sanskrit; now extinct, but interesting as the language in which the sacred books of the Zendavesta are written. This was followed by the Achæmenian Persian, which was spoken when the Empire of Cyrus was the ruling power in Western Asia. Three other varieties have been successively developed in comparatively modern times: viz., the Pehlevi; the Pazend, or Parsee; and the mixed Persian of the present day, which contains a good deal of Arabic.

In primitive ages, when the spiritual world is more vividly apprehended than under the garish and clamorous conditions of an elaborate civilisation, religion is always one of the most powerful of influences. The faith of the Persians and Medes must be reckoned among the early developments of the religious idea; and the national character was moulded by the national belief. The theories of this belief are unfolded in the Zendavesta, or sacred volume of the Parsees, the authorship of which has been ascribed to Zarathustra, Zerdusht, or Zoroaster, who is supposed (though the point is doubtful) to have lived in the sixth century B.C. There can be no question, however, that the opening portions of the Zendavesta, which contain the original, uncorrupted tenets of the Persian religion, are very much older than that date, and it is probable that Zoroaster was the preacher of a new faith, in which the principles of elemental worship were combined with those contained in the most ancient books of the Zendavesta. The original system of the Persians — or what is generally regarded as such—is distinguished by the name of Dualism. Looking at the awful riddle of the world—the existence of Goodness and Beneficence on the one hand, and of Evil and Malevolence on the other—the founders of this religion assumed the reality of two independent Beings, of equal or nearly equal powers; both self-caused and self-sustained, both existing from all eternity, and both indestructible. The name of the Good Spirit was Ahura-mazda, Oromasdes, or Ormuzd, which is supposed to signify "the Great Giver of Life." The Evil Spirit was Angrô-mainyus, Ahriman, or Arimanes, meaning "the Death-dealing"—a Power from whom proceeded war and disease, frost and hail, poverty, sin, and death.

Ormuzd and Ahriman were thus placed by the early Persians at the very apex of their religious system, and it is doubtful whether, in the strictest sense of the word, they believed in any other deities. Yet they acknowledged a number of powerful genii, or angels, who had something of the character of gods, though in a subordinate capacity. Of these, the most important was Mithra, the divinity of the sun. He was of course one of the agents of the beneficent Spirit, who had many other representatives, charged with particular functions. On the other hand, Ahriman was equally provided with a hierarchy of inferior intelligences, engaged in the promotion of malevolent designs. Probably, the belief in a multitude of gods was a return to the very earliest forms of the Aryan religion — those forms which existed before the Indo-European race had quitted its original seats east of the Indus, or separated into the Hindu and Iranian branches. The religious system of the primitive Aryans, as revealed in Sanskrit literature, was a species of Polytheistic Nature-worship, the chief powers in which were Indra, Storm or Thunder; Mithra, Sunlight; Aramati, the Earth; Vayu, Wind; Agni, Fire; and Soma, Intoxication.* These beings—if beings they can be called, and not rather abstractions —were entitled Asuras and Devas; but it is not easy to determine their exact nature. The Asuras were undoubtedly regarded as celestial deities: whether the Devas were propitiated out of a belief in their malignity, is not so certain; but a distinction of some kind appears to be implied in the difference of name. With the Persians, the Devas were decidedly wicked genii; and the modern descendants of the same nation — the Mohammedan subjects of the Shah—still call evil spirits "deevs." Our English word devil is apparently, though perhaps not really, derived from the same root.

The religion of the Persians differed from that of their Aryan progenitors in some important respects. It dispensed with the multitude of presiding Intelligences acknowledged by the earlier race, and placed at the summit of creation two distinct

* Rawlinson's Five Great Monarchies: Media, chap. 4.

Beings, who were not merely embodiments of natural forces. Perhaps we should say that it contemplated only one Being as the Supreme God. Professor Rawlinson asserts that Dualism proper formed no part of the original Persian faith; yet he admits that even in the earliest portions of the Zendavesta—those called the Gâthâs—some vague impersonation of the principles of Good and Evil is to be discerned. This, however, is clearly the germ of the Dualistic conception, which received a further development at a period so remote as to be considerably anterior to the arrival of the Aryans in Media Magna. Angrô-mainyus, or Ahriman, was by that time distinctly opposed to Ahura-mazda, or Ormuzd, as an Evil Spirit of equal power and activity. Both these superior deities were supposed to have existed from all eternity; and as their conflict had had no beginning, so it would have no end. Each possessed his council and his army, the members of which seem to have been highly poetical embodiments of abstract qualities or powers. In the first instance, there can be little doubt, they were so regarded; but ultimately they took their place in the popular belief as realities — not simply as attributes of the Divine Mind. The chief commander of the angelic army is a spirit named Serosh, meaning "the sincere, the beautiful, the victorious, the true, the master of truth." His office is to be in perpetual warfare with the demons, in the prosecution of which task he never slumbers, but guards the world with his drawn sword, particularly after sunset, when the evil genii have the greatest power. It is also one of his duties to walk round the earth, teaching the true religion; and it is related of him that he composed the music of the five earliest Gâthâs. His earthly dwelling-place is a palace supposed to stand on the highest summit of the Elburz range, south of the Caspian—a building adorned with one thousand pillars, lighted within by its own light, and radiant externally with stars. The army of Ahriman is anarchical in its constitution; active, unresting, and often successful, yet devoid of any principal commander, and operating rather by wild impulses than by deliberate system.

The angels who served as lieutenants of the Supreme Beneficence were called Izeds in the old Persian system. They seem, as already observed, to have acquired in time the dignity and importance of subordinate gods; but this was probably a corruption of the original Iranian faith, as that faith appeared in its departure from the Polytheism of the Hindu Aryans. The worship of Mithra (the Sun) is not mentioned in the monumental inscriptions until the reign of Artaxerxes Mnemon in the fourth century B.C., though it is evident, from the testimony of Herodotus, that it must have existed a century before; and doubtless it was still more ancient. In the Gâthâs, or religious songs contained in the first book of the Zendavesta (distinguished by the title of the Yaçna, or Book on Sacrifice), no allusion to Mithra is to be found. He appears, however, in the later divisions of the sacred volume; indeed, it is apparent that the Persian mind gradually underwent a reaction towards the more primitive forms of Aryan belief. The Indian deity, Aramati, reappears in the Iranian worship as the goddess of the earth, Armaiti, who pervades not only the substance of the globe, but the bodies of men and of all other creatures; and Vayu, the Wind, was adored from a very early time. On the other hand, some of the ancient gods were reckoned among the Devas, or wicked spirits.

The faith of ancient Persia was undoubtedly distinguished by some of the finest elements of religion. If it recognised an Evil Principle in the operations of Nature, it likewise affirmed the existence of a Divine Goodness, to whom all the excellence of the world was to be ascribed. The immortality of the soul was taught by the priests of Iran. A place of bliss for the virtuous, and a place of punishment for the wicked, were included in the Persian creed; and Mohammed's idea of a bridge finer than a hair, and sharper than a sword, across which the souls of the faithful are to make their way into Paradise, at the risk of toppling into the pit if their sins overbalance them, is manifestly derived from the Zendavesta. That the resurrection of the body was also part of this ancient religious system, seems to be clearly implied in certain portions of the sacred volume, though not in the very earliest. But the Iranians did not simply proclaim a theology: their religion was associated, as all noble religions are, with the highest personal virtues — with truth, purity, industry, and a devout acknowledgment of the Celestial Beneficence. It was incumbent on them to make frequent offering of prayers, praises, and thanksgivings; and some of their hymns appear to have been extremely beautiful.

"We worship," says one of these hymns, "Ahura-mazda, the pure, the master of purity. We worship the whole creation of the true spirit, both the spiritual and terrestial; all that supports the welfare of the good creation, and the spread of the good religion. We praise all good thoughts, all good words, all good deeds, which are or shall be; and we likewise keep clean and pure all that

is good. O, Ahura-mazda, thou true, happy being! We strive to think, to speak, and to do, only such actions as may be best fitted to promote the life of the body and the life of the soul. We beseech the spirit of earth to grant us beautiful and fertile fields—to the believer as well as to the unbeliever, to him who has riches, as well as to him who has no possession."* Sacrifices formed part of the religious ceremonial of these believers; but the victims were never human. It is to be regretted, however, that in a religion so full of benevolence there should have been any sacrifice of living beings at all. The animals having been slain, the flesh was shown to the sacred fire, and then, as with the Hebrews, eaten at a solemn feast by priests and worshippers. Amongst the primitive Aryans, great importance was attached to what was called the Soma observance, which, having reference to the deity of Intoxication, involved positive drunkenness on the part of all concerned. These orgies, retained by the Brahmins of India, were repudiated by the Persians, who substituted for them a ceremony in which the juice of the Homa plant, in an unfermented state, was consumed in moderate quantities. Connected with the religious dogmas of the Persians were a number of romantic legends with respect to the early condition of man, the golden age, and the achievements of ancient heroes. But these are scarcely within the view of history, and must be remitted to pages of a more purely literary character.

It is the fate of all religions to undergo considerable modifications in the course of ages. The simplicity of the original doctrines is corrupted by additions, or that which was elaborate at first is curtailed and evaporated. The theological system of the Persians and Medes altered much with time, and a very important departure is associated with the name of Zoroaster. From the Scythic, and therefore Turanian, aborigines with whom they came in contact, the Medes derived those principles of fire-worship which they afterwards engrafted on their older faith. The primitive seats of that worship were among the lofty mountains west and south-west of the Caspian; and the fire-temples of a remote antiquity may yet be seen in the same regions, occupying the summits of rocky eminences in the austerity of lonely deserts. The priests of this religion were called Magi, and the faith itself is known as Magism. Originating in the countries of Armenia, Azerbijan, and Kurdistan, Magism afterwards spread both to the south and east, so as to be widely diffused over the vast tract of country lying between Mesopotamia and India. The Medes especially were influenced by this strange and fascinating worship; the Persians less so, but still to an appreciable degree. It extended even into Chaldæa, where the native Sabæism was modified by some admixture of the more northern system. This must have been at a very early date; and the Medes appear to have accepted Magism—either in combination with their ancestral creed, or in complete substitution for it—shortly after their conquest of the Turanian tribes inhabiting the vicinity of Mount Zagros.

The principal feature of Magism was the adoration of the four elements—fire, air, earth, and water. The Magi seem to have recognised no personal gods, but to have paid their devotions to the elements themselves (and especially to fire) in elevated regions, and in the open air. It was an article of their belief that the altar-fires were, in the first instance, kindled from heaven; and the sacred flames were accordingly kept burning from age to age by priests appointed for that purpose. These fires were regarded with so awful a reverence that to blow them with the breath was a capital offence. Water was the element which came next in estimation; and here again the rules against pollution were very strict — a strictness which was doubtless productive of excellent sanitary results, though these may not have been contemplated in the original intention. Earth and air likewise received their due honours, and a variety of ceremonials gave solemnity to the practice of religion. The priests formed, apparently, a hereditary caste, and claimed to have the power of explaining omens, expounding dreams, and foretelling future events by the use of divining rods. Thus they were supposed to possess thaumaturgical as well as religious gifts, and the modern word "magic" is plainly derived from the appellation of the Magi, and from the mysterious rites in which they frequently engaged. Their incantations about the sacred fire derived an awful and impressive character from the desert spots in which they were performed, from the occult nature of the proceedings themselves, and from the dress of the priests, whose persons were concealed in long white robes, and whose faces were to a great extent hidden by the lappets of the tall felt caps which they wore upon their heads.

To avoid contamination of the sacred elements, the Magians resorted to some singular methods for getting rid of the dead. The corpses of the priests themselves were exposed, so as to be

* "Yaçna of Seven Chapters," belonging to the second period of the Iranian religion.—Rawlinson's Five Great Monarchies: Media, chap. 4.

devoured by birds of prey; the laity were allowed to cover the bodies of their deceased relatives with a coating of wax, and then to lay them in the ground. This was in truth an evasion of the prohibition as to polluting the earth; but it may have been found necessary as a concession to popular feeling or general convenience. The stricter custom, however, prevails at the present day among the Guebres, or Parsees, who still preserve, in India and in Persia, the old Magian creed of fire-worship. For the purpose of exposing dead bodies without causing pollution to the earth, round towers are erected to a considerable height. These edifices have neither door nor window, but are provided at the top with a number of iron bars, sloping inwards. The summit is attained by means of ladders; the bodies are placed crossways on the bars, and the flesh is soon stripped off by the vultures and crows which are numerous in those regions. The bones then fall through to the bottom, and the bars are ready to be used again in the same way.* In some parts of the Zendavesta, written after the combination of Magism with the older Iranic faith, buildings of this character are called "Towers of Silence," and directions are given for constructing them. How so strange a system could really have been considered as other than contaminating, both to the earth and to the air, it is difficult to understand. But ingenious compromises are seldom wanting to reconcile troublesome dogmas with the necessities of every-day existence.

The Medes, as we have stated, were quick to adopt the religion of the Turanian tribes, and to become worshippers of fire; but the Persians resisted it for several generations. Still, it made some progress even with the latter, and at length a fusion of the rival systems was effected by Zoroaster. The personality of this religious reformer is involved in a good deal of obscurity, and the period at which he lived has been the subject of many conflicting theories. The probability seems to be that there were two great leaders of that name; the first living, perhaps, anterior to 2234 B.C.—the second, in the sixth century before our era. To the first of these, several of the earlier parts of the Zendavesta are traditionally ascribed: he must therefore have been a professor of the old Iranian faith in all its purity. The second may have been the author of the latter portions of the sacred volume, and was the means of introducing to his countrymen a species of reformed Magism, in association with certain *modifications of the original Persian* creed.

Clearly fabulous as are many of the details of this second Zoroaster's life, they cannot be wholly overlooked. The prophet is said to have been born, about 589 B.C., at Urmia, a town of Azerbijan. The province of Azerbijan, it may be as well to recall, is one of the mountainous regions in which Magism had its origin; and the name of that province means "the Land of Fire." Ctesias, indeed, states that Zoroaster was an Armenian; but the two countries are adjacent, and both were early seats of the fire-worship. The place of Zoroaster's birth, however, is as doubtful as any other fact of his life. By various Greek and Latin authors the prophet has been described as a Bactrian, a Chaldæan, a Median, a Perso-Median, a Persian, an Armenian, a Pamphylian, and even a native of Proconnesus, now called the island of Marmora. He is said to have been an early king and lawgiver of Bactria; but in truth the point is one which no human ingenuity can settle. Lohrasp, the father of Gushtasp or Vishtaspa (more generally known as Hystaspes, the father of Darius I.), was the reigning monarch of Persia, according to popular tradition, when the holy man was born. His parents, though of noble descent, lived in humble circumstances; but the future greatness of Zoroaster was revealed to his mother in prophetic dreams, ere the infant had yet drawn the breath of life. The birth was attended by miraculous circumstances. Pliny, who of course simply repeated what he had read in earlier authors, relates that the brain of the child palpitated so violently as to repel the hand when placed on it.† At an early period of his life, Zoroaster passed twenty years of seclusion in a cavern in the mountains of Elburz; and while there, the principles of his religion were miraculously communicated to him. The relation is that one day the angel Bahman, clad in glory like the sun, and with his face covered by a veil, appeared before the lonely seer, and asked who he was, and what he wanted. The reply of Zoroaster shows that he was a follower of the Iranian religion. "I seek only," he answered, "what is agreeable to Ormuzd, who has created the two worlds; but I know not what he wants with me. O thou who art pure! show me the way of the law." Bahman bade him arise, and appear before Ormuzd himself, when he should receive an answer to his prayer. Zoroaster followed in the steps of Bahman, who said, "Shut thine eyes, and walk swiftly." On

* Note to Rawlinson's Herodotus, I. 140.

† Natural History, Book VII., chap. 16.

reopening his eyes, he saw the glory of heaven, and, in the company of angels, approached Ormuzd, who spoke to him out of a great, bright flame of fire. "Teach the nations," said the Divine Being, "that my light is hidden under all that shines. Whenever you turn your face towards the light, and follow my command, Ahriman will be seen to fly. In this world there is nothing superior to light." The Zendavesta was then handed to the prophet, with instructions to declare it before Gushtasp, the reigning king of Persia. The various Amshaspands, or heavenly ministers, conferred their several powers on Zoroaster, and the inspired one returned to earth, to preach the true religion.

Gushtasp, who was then at Balkh, soon adopted the new faith. Balkh (otherwise known as Bactra) was situated in that remote part of the old Persian Empire which is now the khanate of Bokhara. From this wild and distant region, the religion of Zoroaster spread rapidly over the whole of the immense dominion which acknowledged the sceptre of Gushtasp, and particularly in the province of Azerbijan, the people of which were disposed by their fire-worshipping habits to receive it in a sympathetic spirit. The king ordered twelve thousand cow-hides to be tanned, in order that the divine rules of faith and practice might be recorded and preserved. When complete, these parchments were deposited in a vault hollowed out of a rock at Persepolis, and holy men were appointed to guard them, and to keep the profane

MAGI ROUND THE SACRED FIRE. (See p. 214.)

at a distance. It is added in the legendary accounts that the reformed Magism of Zoroaster travelled beyond the bounds of Persia into Chaldæa, India, and other countries; and no doubt the number of proselytes was vast. There seems, nevertheless, to have been a persecution of these innovators in the territory of the Turanians, during which persecution Zoroaster died. It is believed by some that he was murdered by religious enemies; but scarcely anything can be affirmed of him with confidence. His death, however it took place, is referred to the year 513 B.C., when he was about seventy-six.

SOLDIERS. (*From Processional bas-relief at Persepolis.*)

Ancient authors state that this obscure person was an astrologer and magician, as well as a religious reformer and prophet. Fragments of a volume attributed to him, and entitled "The Oracles of Zoroaster," are still extant; but the German scholar Brucker conjectures that the work was written by some Platonist of the second century. The many confused and contradictory traditions with respect to Zoroaster have induced certain modern authors to believe that six individuals of that name existed in different ages; but it is probable that there were not more than two at the utmost. The Persian seer has been identified with Abraham, with Moses, with Elijah, and with Esdras. Prideaux supposed that he had been a servant to Ezekiel or Daniel;* and numerous attempts were made in the last century to show that a considerable part of his system was derived from the Hebrews, and combined by him with the Magism which he found existing in Media. Warburton characterised the whole story as a fable, invented by Persian writers under the Caliphs.† "All authors," says Bayle in his Dictionary, "are full of variations concerning the time of Zoroaster. Plutarch, in his treatise on the worship of Isis and Osiris, says that he was believed to have lived five thousand years before the Trojan war. According to some, he was contemporary with King Ninus, who, as Eusebius relates, died about 825 years before that date. There are scarce any people who do not believe that there were several Zoroasters, as well as several Jupiters and Herculeses." At the present day, however, it appears to be generally admitted that the older beliefs of the Iranians underwent some change in the sixth century B.C., and that this was effected by Zerdusht, or Zoroaster.

* "The Old and New Testament connected in the History of the Jews and Neighbouring Nations," Part I., Book IV.

† "The Divine Legation of Moses." Notes to Book IV.

The later Zoroastrianism differed in some important respects from the earlier. The reformed religion admitted a good deal of the old Magian fire-worship, and it modified, while adopting, the belief in Dualism. According to the faith of the earlier Persians, the Good Being and the Evil Being were self-existent and eternal. Their conflict would never cease, for neither was superior in power to the other. In the system generally attributed to the Zoroaster of the sixth century before Christ, both Ormuzd and Ahriman sprang from a still greater Deity, Zervan-Akharana, who seems to have been an embodiment of the abstract idea of Illimitable Time. The germ of all things was of course included in this mysterious Existence; but, in a secondary sense, the creators of the visible world were Ormuzd and Ahriman. Ormuzd made the sun, the moon, the stars, and the earth, whose motion he continues to regulate. His angels seek to preserve the elements, the seasons, and the human race, and the ministers of Ahriman are equally active in endeavouring to destroy them. Light is the type and manifestation of the Good Spirit, and therefore the faithful turn their faces, when worshipping, towards the sun or the altar-fire; darkness is the natural habitation of the Evil Being, who, out of pure malice, created all hurtful and wicked things. The latter is described as having "pierced the egg of Ormuzd," or, in other words, mingled evil with the good of the universe. From this admixture proceeds the multifarious character of the world, with its failures, its sufferings, its baffled aspirations, its beauty marred with contradictions, its virtues perpetually blighted by the shadow of vice and of corrupt desires. Life is the gift of Ormuzd; death is one of the many curses inflicted by Ahriman. But, in the modified Zoroastrian system, the former is in the end to triumph over the latter. The war between the opposing deities is to go on with ever-increasing violence for twelve thousand years; at the end of which period the world is to be consumed, and a new creation to take its place, wherein Ormuzd is to reign without a rival. It is not clear whether Ahriman is to be cast down into the abyss of darkness, and confined there for ever, or to be converted to the truth and goodness he has so long opposed. Both results are stated in the numerous writings on this subject.

From the foregoing sketch it will be seen that the Persian religion underwent three distinct developments: first, a simple form of Monotheism, showing but slight traces of the Dualistic system; secondly, the Dualistic system very strongly emphasised; thirdly, the same system combined with Magism, and including a plain assertion of the ultimate superiority of Ormuzd to Ahriman, of the derivation of both Spirits from an antecedent Cause, and of the cessation at some future time of the great conflict between Good and Evil. For our knowledge of these several developments we are to some extent dependent on tradition. The Zendavesta exists only in an incomplete shape, and is, in fact, a compilation from older writings which have been lost. The original number of divisions is said to have been twenty-one, and Alexander the Great is credited (though by a doubtful tradition) with having destroyed the larger part. All that we now possess consists of eight books, which were pieced together out of ancient fragments during the reign of Ardeshir, the first Persian king of the Sassanian dynasty, in the third century of the Christian era. The language is that old form of the Aryan tongue which is called the Zend, and which shows marked affinities with the Sanskrit of the Vedas, or sacred books of Brahminism, and with the Persian of the cuneiform inscriptions. Anquetil du Perron, a French scholar of the eighteenth century, was the first to make Europe acquainted with the Zendavesta. He published in 1771 a translation which long enjoyed great repute; but modern scholars accuse it of many mistakes, and it has been followed by other versions (chiefly French and German) which the critical regard as of superior worth. The term "Zendavesta," first used by du Perron, is a perversion of the original. It should rather be "Avesta-Zend"—that is to say, Text and Comment.*

The account of the Persian religion given by Herodotus in the First Book of his History has reference to the Magism which had been largely adopted by the Medes, rather than to the Zoroastrianism which is more particularly associated with Iran. He states that the Persians had no images of the gods, no temples, and no altars, the use of all such things being regarded as folly. They denied that the gods had the same nature as men; but it was one of their practices to ascend the summits of lofty mountains, and there offer sacrifice to Jupiter, which, according to Herodotus, was the name they gave to the whole circuit of the firmament. They likewise made offerings to the sun and moon, to the earth, to fire, to water, and to the winds. Those, we are told, were the only gods whose worship had come down to the Persians from ancient times; but at a later period they began the worship of Urania, which they

* Rawlinson's Five Great Monarchies: Media, chap. 4.

borrowed from the Arabians and Assyrians. The same authority alludes to the Magi and their custom of chanting hymns, and says that it was unlawful to offer sacrifice unless a Magus was present.* In all these details we see clearly that Herodotus was describing the opinions and ceremonials of the fire-worshippers, and not the religion of either Zoroaster, if, indeed, we are to suppose two of that name. When the Greek historian wrote, the systems had probably not coalesced, and it would seem that he had no knowledge of those tenets which the Aryans had brought with them from the East, and which are still preserved in the Zendavesta. He was personally acquainted with Media, and perhaps Susiana; but not with Persia Proper. His account of the Iranian faith is therefore manifestly incomplete, though interesting and accurate as far as it goes. The developments of that faith were numerous, and not always in the best direction. By contact with surrounding peoples, the Persians acquired a tendency to idolatrous and debasing rites, and imported into their own religion several of the gods and goddesses of Western Asia. Yet the belief in Dualism remained, and the opposing deities of Good and Evil still confronted one another from the summits of the spiritual life.

The Persians were divided into ten tribes. Three of these were noble, three agricultural, and four nomadic; and at the head of all stood the royal tribe of the Pasargadæ, whose name was also borne by the ancient capital of the land. It is supposed that the members of this tribe were the direct descendants of the original Persians who quitted the countries beyond the Indus, and settled in the territory of Iran. The other tribes need not be particularised; but the greater number formed a strong and gifted nation, closely allied to the Medes, though perhaps less mixed with other races than the people who established their brief empire at Ecbatana. In the nomadic tribes, ethnologers discern the remnants of that old Turanian stock which occupied the country in still earlier ages, augumented, it may be, by kindred hordes from the eastern side of the Caspian. Inhabiting the mountainous districts of Persia, these wanderers followed the lives of brigands, probably acting under the impression that they were the natural possessors of the soil, and that their predatory habits were but the assertion of a rightful claim. The dominant race, however, was Aryan, and even the aborigines acquired in time something of the Aryan character.

* Herodotus, I. 131, 2.

In many important respects, the ancient Persians compare not unfavourably with other nations of Asia. They were a lively and quick-witted race, mobile, impressionable, and imaginative, with a feeling for poetry and art, and with a good deal of general adaptability, though probably no great depth in any one department of the human intellect. Their valour was remarkable, and, before they were enervated by excessive indulgence, nothing could surpass the energy with which they prosecuted various enterprises, and built up the splendid edifice of their dominion. It is remarkable to find in them a profound respect for veracity, since that is a virtue in which Oriental races are usually deficient. But Herodotus records that every young Persian was taught three things which were regarded as of the highest consequence: viz., to ride, to draw the bow, and to speak the truth. This grand abhorrence of lying and deceit underwent some deterioration in the days of Persian decline; but, at an early period, truth, honour, and good faith were so highly valued that, even if entrapped into a promise the fulfilment of which might be injurious to himself or his country, a Persian king would not abandon it. The Zendavesta enjoined a strict observance of truth, and spoke of Ormuzd himself as the father and chief example of that virtue. Hence the Persian inherited from his religion a certain nobility of character, which, so long as it was maintained, went far to redeem his weaknesses and faults. He was often generous, kind, and hospitable, and entertained so good an opinion of human nature as to deny the possibility of any one having ever killed his father or mother. On the other hand, he was luxurious and self-indulgent; servile towards his prince; unduly elated by good fortune, and depressed by adversity; prone to give extravagant vent to his feelings, whether of joy or sorrow; and in all things exhibiting a certain child-like character, which was not without its charm, nor yet without its special drawbacks.

The military qualities of the people were of a high order. Their cavalry generally was acknowledged to be the finest in the world—partly on account of the splendid horses which Persia was famous for producing, and partly by reason of the soldier-like virtues exhibited by the nobility. Their infantry also was excellent, and the whole of the tribes were skilful archers. Spears, bows and arrows, swords, battle-axes, and slings for the projection of stones, were among the offensive weapons which they used, and which we see to the present day depicted in the sculptures of Persepolis. The uniforms of the soldiers were

for the most part plain and serviceable, and some of the men were protected by immense shields, or by armour which consisted either of a coat of mail, or of quilted linen. In the later periods of the empire, the Persians covered their war-horses with leather and metal defences; but these hampered the movements of the cavalry, and were sometimes productive of disastrous results. Chariots were employed in battle, but seem not to have been regarded with as much favour as by the Assyrians and some other nations. Elephants were seldom trained for warlike purposes, and it was only as a peculiar device that, at the battle of Sardis (described in the last Chapter), Cyrus mounted some of his men on camels. He was aware of the curious physiological fact that the horse cannot endure either the sight or smell of those animals, and by the use of them contrived to throw the Lydian cavalry into confusion and rout.

When attacking the enemy, the Persian armies were divided into three bodies—the chariots, the horse, and the foot. The first of these occupied the front line, behind which stood the cavalry on the wings, with the infantry in the centre. Vast numbers of men were usually employed, and victory was often obtained by sheer weight and impetus. The infantry were formed into several oblong squares, set close together, and the inferior troops were stationed in the rear. No very elaborate system of tactics appears to have been observed; and if, on closing with its adversary, a Persian army was not speedily successful—especially if its own line of battle was broken—consternation and flight were apt to set in. Yet these Aryan warriors would sometimes renew the assault again and again with fresh bodies of troops, which their enormous military resources enabled them to bring up. At other times they would outflank and surround their opponents, and they were not incapable of desperate and prolonged attacks upon the solid phalanx of the Spartans. Nothing could surpass the excellence of the Persian cavalry, whether heavy or light. The former bore down all opposition by sheer force and vehemence; the latter performed a variety of rapid and ingenious movements, harassing the flanks of the enemy, and allowing but little opportunity for reprisals. These light horsemen could discharge their arrows backwards, even when in full retreat, and that with deadly effect—an accomplishment which was afterwards practised with still greater adroitness by the Parthians. As the Persian Empire grew in size, and included a great number of different races, necessitating a division of the army into distinct nations, the battle-array presented a picturesque variety of physiognomies, complexions, and costumes, comprising, besides the Persians and Medes themselves in all their barbaric splendour, Scythians from the north, Indians from the east, and Ethiopians from the reaches of the Upper Nile.*

The army was frequently commanded by the king himself, who marched in the midst of a large guard of picked soldiers, horse and foot, accompanied by emblems of religion, probably including, in the later ages, silver altars flaming with the sacred fire which was supposed to have been kindled from heaven. Under the commander-in-chief (whether the sovereign himself, or some one appointed by him) were general officers, heads of divisions, chiefs of the several nations, and captains of various degrees of authority. An immense train of baggage-waggons, and of litters carrying women, encumbered the movements of the army; but the Persians took careful measures against surprise, and entrenched their camps at night, if they had any reason to fear the vicinity of a foe. The tents, when pitched, faced the east—doubtless, in order that the soldiers might pay their adorations to the rising sun. Commissariat arrangements on an elaborate scale ensured a sufficient amount of food to these enormous bodies, and ships laden with corn followed along the coasts, or by the rivers, wherever this was practicable. The people of any district, moreover, were obliged to supply the whole army with food, if it rested for the night at a place of consequence, and even to furnish the king or chief commander with luxuries. The treatment of prisoners of war seems to have been humane, and even generous; but rebels were punished with severity. The Persians had also a powerful navy, the best ships in which were the triremes—decked galleys, impelled by three tiers of rowers, and provided with a beak at the prow, which, like the ram in modern fleets, was used for breaking in the sides of opposing vessels.

The style of living of the Persian kings was characterised by all the extravagant splendour of Asiatic despots. Clad in robes of purple and gold, with crimson trousers, and boots of a deep saffron hue—decked with bracelets, earrings, and sumptuous jewellery, and holding a regal sceptre in his hand—the monarch sat on a throne resplendent with costly metals, in palaces of vast size and gorgeous ornamentation. Pillars of gold, inlaid with precious stones,—walls of similar construction,—hangings of rich stuffs and brilliant colours,—couches of gold and silver,—sculptured marbles,

* Rawlinson's Five Great Monarchies: Persia, chap. 3.

and objects of art priceless for their rarity and excellence,—such were the surroundings of a Persian sovereign. The bed of Darius Hystaspes was overshadowed by a golden vine, where the grapes were represented by jewels of enormous size. Ancient authors speak likewise of a golden plane-tree, and of other magnificent works by Theodore of Samos. The personal attendants on the king were numberless. Besides the women of the harem, who formed a distinct establishment, a vast body of officers, servants, eunuchs, guards, nobles, princes, captives of high rank, ambassadors, and others, filled the palaces almost to overflowing. Fifteen thousand persons are stated to have been fed daily within the precincts of the royal residence, and a thousand beasts, besides game and poultry, were slaughtered for each day's dinner. Incense, odorous unguents, and exquisite scents, were largely used; splendid banquets were frequently given; and drunkenness was a permitted indulgence.

The nobles lived in a proportionate degree of luxury. Their habits were sumptuous, like those of their masters, and they possessed considerable landed property. In their costume, they anticipated the refinements of modern life to a much greater extent than other nations of antiquity. From the accounts given by Xenophon and Strabo, it would seem that they wore tunics, trousers, drawers, shirts, gloves, shoes, and socks. The Persians were in fact an elaborately-clothed people, unlike the Greeks, who arrayed themselves but scantily. Youths of the better order were educated in the arts of war and the practice of the chase. Some amount of agricultural knowledge they were permitted to acquire; the principles of religion formed a part of their instruction; and their patriotism was excited by poems commemorating the deeds of national heroes, which were recited by their teachers. But they were probably not taught to read, and of literary culture they had none. The lives of the Persians in the early ages of their history were simple, severe, virtuous, and manly; but corruption set in with success, and later epochs were noted for viciousness and effeminacy. To the Greeks and Romans, the kings and nobles of Persia were a standing example of excessive indulgence and ostentatious display.

The condition of the humbler classes was similar to that of the poor in most Oriental countries. They had no rights under the law, and only such privileges as their superiors chose to grant. The government of the country was a mere despotism, and all suffered from the wantonness or the insanity of irresponsible dominion. In this respect, however, the nobles fared worse than the peasantry, as their position exposed them to the jealousy and hatred of the monarch. Endowed with absolute powers, which he multiplied at pleasure by deputing some portion to favourites, a Persian king slew whom he pleased, without being under the necessity of even alleging any crime. The punishments thus arbitrarily decreed were generally characterised by the most ferocious and elaborate cruelty. Behind the golden splendour of court life, death lurked in many horrible and appalling shapes; and the shadow of needless affliction darkened the homes of those who permitted their sovereigns to assume to themselves the style and attributes of gods.

CHAPTER XIX.

EARLY HISTORY OF PERSIA, AND LATE HISTORY OF JUDÆA.

Origin and Early Development of the Persian Nationality—Union of the Tribal Governments under one Monarch—Subordination of the Persians to the Medes—Cyrus the Great: Romantic Narrative of Herodotus as to his Early Life—The Story of Cyrus according to Nicolaüs Damascenus—Media Conquered by Cyrus: Beginning of the Persian Empire—Destruction of the Lydian Monarchy—Operations against the Greek Colonies of Asia Minor—Eastern Conquests of Cyrus—Capture of Babylon—Edict of Cyrus for permitting the Return of the Captive Jews to Palestine—The Jews of the Dispersion—Building of the Second Temple of Jerusalem—Missions of Ezra to Judæa—Revision of the Hebrew Scriptures by Ezra—Missions of Nehemiah—Establishment of Synagogues by Ezra—Modified Form of the Jewish Worship—Malachi, the Last of the Hebrew Prophets—Murder in the Temple by the High Priest—Last Expedition and Death of Cyrus—Monument of the Great King.

It has already been shown that the Persians were a branch of the great Aryan stock (sometimes called the Indo-European race), the original seats of which were in Hindostan. At what time the separation from the parent stem took place we have no means of knowing; but it must have been at a very early period. The cause of the division may have been religious; for those who

adhered to the elaborate Polytheism contained in the Vedas would doubtless be intolerant of the much simpler views—whether Monotheistic or Dualistic — which found expression in the early portions of the Zendavesta. Supposing this heresy to have originated east of the Indus, as some have believed, the persons adopting it would be very likely, for the sake of greater freedom, to emigrate into distant lands. Thus the Persian nationality, as a distinct branch of the Aryan race, came into existence; but it was long ere the new people acquired a settled country. For several generations they seem to have been wanderers, moving in the first instance in a north-westerly direction, and afterwards in a southerly. The inscriptions of Shalmaneser II., King of Assyria, who reigned about the middle of the ninth century B.C., speak of them as existing in south-western Armenia, together with the Medes. They were then simply a collection of tribes, each governed by its own chief, and all independent of one another. The Assyrian monarch exacted tribute from twenty-five of these tribes, but did not otherwise interfere with their liberty. By the time of Sennacherib, in the eighth or seventh century B.C., they had travelled a considerable distance southward, and had reached the districts north and north-east of Susiana. Thence they soon afterwards moved into the region which has since been know as Persia Proper.

The tribal government of the country continued until the consolidation of the Persian communities under a single monarch called Hakhamanish, or, in its Hellenised form, Achæmenes, who began to reign about 700 B.C. The union of the tribes under a central government may well have been prompted by fear of the Medes; but this is a process of development which all races that are destined to greatness must of necessity pass through. Of Achæmenes, little or nothing is recorded. He was followed by his son, Teispes, who was succeeded by three other kings of the most shadowy and vague description. At this period, the existence of the Persian monarchy was precarious, being overshadowed by the far greater power of its rival. Herodotus, indeed, asserts that the Persians were completely subjected by the Medes —a conquest which, if it took place at all, was probably before the year 634 B.C. But it is doubtful whether the alleged fact should be regarded as historical, and in truth Herodotus had no opportunity of correcting the exaggerations of the one race by the statements of the other. Nevertheless, it is tolerably certain that Persia, in the early stages of her history, was in a position of dependence on the warlike Medes. The Persian king was obliged to do homage to the sovereign of the Northern State, and to send his eldest son as a hostage to Ecbatana, where he was kept in a species of stately durance, as a guarantee of the father's fidelity. It can readily be understood that such a condition was in the highest degree galling to the pride of the Persian rulers, and that, with augumenting strength, the disposition to shake it off would grow with proportionate intensity.

The earliest Persian king that comes before us with any distinctness is Cambyses I., the father of Cyrus the Great. That the latter was really the son of the former, and that Cambyses I. was actually a reigning monarch—points with respect to which ancient authors are at variance—are facts recorded by Cyrus himself on a brick found at Senkereh, where he calls himself "the powerful king, son of Cambyses, the powerful king." Like his predecessors, the first Cambyses was a vassal to the Median sovereign, and his son Cyrus lived, according to custom, at the Median court. If we are to believe a romantic story related by Herodotus, the youthful prince was grandson to Astyages, King of Media, his mother being the daughter of that monarch. Alarmed by a dream of evil omen concerning this daughter, the king would not permit her to marry any Mede of suitable rank, fearing that in that case her posterity would effect the conquest of all Asia. He therefore united her to Cambyses the Persian, whom Herodotus describes, not as a king, but as a man of good family and quiet disposition. A little before the birth of the first child, however, Astyages had another dream, which renewed his apprehensions. In the vain hope of averting his fate, he sent for his daughter, Mandane, out of Persia, and caused her to be closely guarded. On the birth of the infant, he placed it in the hands of a kinsman named Harpagus, with directions that he should kill it. Harpagus disobeyed his orders, and gave the child to one of the royal herdsmen, whose pasturages lay north of Ecbatana, towards the Euxine, and whom (thinking in this way to divert from himself the guilt of actual murder) he charged to expose the babe in such a manner as to ensure its perishing from cold and want. The wife of the herdsman, however, persuaded her husband to cast forth the body of a still-born infant of their own, and to rear the living child in their cottage. Ten years later, Cyrus (as he was afterwards called) had become a spirited boy, with the instinct of command strongly developed in him. One day he was chosen by his playfellows to be their king, and exhibited an extraordinary

THE BOY CYRUS PLAYING THE KING.

aptitude for the part. He appointed guards, courtiers, messengers, and a chief minister, gave directions for public edifices, and severely scourged a disobedient officer. The lad thus maltreated was the son of a Median noble, and complaint was made to Astyages. The herdsman being sent for, and questioned about the boy who passed for his own son, the truth came out, and Harpagus was then called upon to explain his part in the transaction. Angry in his heart at the infraction of his orders, the king nevertheless pretended to be pleased at having been saved from the commission of a great crime, and told Harpagus to send his only son to court to be the playfellow of Cyrus, as the child of Mandane was now named. At the same time, Harpagus was invited to a grand banquet in celebration of the unexpected event which had just occurred, and which the king professed had filled him with so much delight that he intended to offer a sacrifice in token of his gratitude.

Having got the child of Harpagus in his power, Astyages (according to the narrative of Herodotus) caused the boy to be slain, and the greater portion of the flesh to be cooked for the evening's festival. This accursed food he placed before Harpagus, who ate in ignorance of what he was receiving. At the conclusion of the repast, the king's attendants brought forward the head, hands, and feet of the child, and showed them to the bereaved father. "Do you know what beast's flesh you have been eating?" asked Astyages. Harpagus, with that suppression of outward emotion which despotism induces in its slaves, replied that he knew very well, and that all was good which pleased the king. Nevertheless, he nourished secretly the desire of vengeance, and, when Cyrus had grown up, incited him to lead an army against Astyages, with a view to his deposition. The young prince had long before been sent back to Persia by his grandfather; but Harpagus managed to communicate with him. He also stirred up the Median nobles to revolt, and in time Cyrus appeared across the frontier at the head of a great army. Astyages, as if infatuated by Providence, gave the command of his forces to Harpagus, notwithstanding the atrocious wrong which he had done him in years gone by. The outraged father took care, when the opposing armies met, to betray the greater part of the king's legions into the hands of the enemy—a design in which he was aided by the malcontent nobles, and by that hatred of the sovereign which a long course of tyranny had created in the whole body of the people. Enraged at the defection of his troops, Astyages advanced in person against the allies, but was utterly defeated, and taken prisoner. Thus, in the relation of Herodotus, ended the separate dominion of the Medes.*

A very different account of Cyrus and his rebellion, and one possessing much more the appearance of historic truth, is given by Nicolaüs Damascenus, who probably followed the authority of Ctesias or of Dino. According to Nicolaüs, Cyrus was no relation of Astyages, who retained him about the court simply out of personal regard. The young prince, however, was inflamed with the ambition of freeing his native country, Persia, from the Median yoke, and with this view obtained permission from Astyages to pay a visit to his father. He had not been gone long before the king, recalling to mind a Chaldæan prophecy, to the effect that Cyrus would be the future sovereign of the Persians, ordered that he should be pursued and brought back, either dead or alive. The horsemen despatched on this errand were defeated by Cyrus at the head of a body of troops whom he found waiting for him near the frontier. Exasperated by his discomfiture, Astyages conducted an immense army into Persia, and engaged the forces of Cyrus and his father. A bloody engagement ensued, but the result was indecisive. The struggle was recommenced on the following day, and the Median sovereign, whose hosts were much more numerous than those of his adversaries, obtained a signal victory. A fortified town in the vicinity of the field of battle was captured; the father of Cyrus was slain; and the Persians fell back towards their capital, Pasargadæ.

The intermediate country was wild and mountainous, and the forward route of the victors lay through a narrow pass, shut in by smooth and precipitous rocks. Here the Persians were drawn up to the number of ten thousand. The position was too strong to be forced, and Astyages sent a detachment of his army along the foot of the range, with orders to seize the heights over the defile as soon as practicable. When this was effected, the Persians were compelled to retire to a lower range of hills nearer the capital. Here also the ground was steep, and thickets of wild olive afforded admirable cover to the defenders. The Medes, in spite of the most desperate attempts, were unable to ascend the slopes, for the Persians hurled down on them great masses of rock, which the ground furnished in abundant quantities. On the following day the assailants, renewing the attack, gained the summit of the hill, where the Persian women and children had been placed for safety. All seemed lost; but the taunts of their

* Herodotus, Book I., chaps. 107—128.

wives and mothers nerved the Persians to a fresh effort, and the Medes, staggered by a fierce and unexpected charge, rolled down the hill in confusion, leaving, it is alleged, sixty thousand of their dead upon the ground. A fifth battle seems to have been afterwards fought by Astyages, who was then so hopelessly defeated that all the insignia of Median royalty fell into the hands of the conquerors. These were at once assumed by Cyrus, and the soldiers saluted him "King of Media and Persia." The discrowned monarch fled with a few adherents towards Ecbatana, but, being closely pursued, sustained another defeat before he could reach that city, and was made prisoner by the victorious rebel.

At the close of the struggle with Media, in 558 B.C., Cyrus found himself master of the whole region between the Persian Gulf in the south, and the Euxine in the north—between the desert of Khorassan in the east, and the river Halys in the west. The Persian had succeeded to the Median Empire, and the Hellenised nationalities of Asia Minor were threatened with extinction. Cyrus was then just forty years of age—the most successful warrior of his time, the ruler of a vast dominion, and the possessor of the accumulated wealth of Nineveh and Ecbatana. His triumphs had been brilliant and wonderful; but he was not content to spend the rest of his life in idleness. It is possible also that he feared the rivalry of the Lydian king, Crœsus, whose strength, if not equal to his own, was yet formidable, and who, remembering the alliance between his father and Cyaxares of Media, was presumably not well affected towards the new power which had arisen on the ruins of the old. An attack on Lydia, therefore, would very probably have been one of the earliest of the enterprises of Cyrus after the conquest of Astyages, even had not Crœsus himself anticipated hostile action by concluding alliances with Sparta, with Babylon, and with Egypt, against the martial sovereign of Persia. This provoked the war which terminated at Sardis in the utter defeat of the Lydian monarch (546 B.C.), the incidents of which have already been related.

Having completed the subjugation of Lydia, and added it to his already extensive empire, Cyrus made arrangements for controlling the various populations of Asia Minor who might still think of displaying some independence, and then left Sardis for the capital of Media. Events, however, soon proved that he had relied too confidently on the terror of his achievements for keeping the Lydians in subjection after his departure. He had confined to one Pactyas, himself a Lydian, the duty of conveying the treasures of Crœsus to Ecbatana. Animated by feelings of patriotism, Pactyas stirred up a revolt among his countrymen, about 545 B.C., and, with the assistance of a number of Greeks and other mercenaries, took possession of Sardis, and drove Tabalus, the Persian commandant, into the citadel, where he was closely besieged. Cyrus was informed of the fact before he had reached Ecbatana, but did not consider the movement of sufficient gravity to require his personal interference. He accordingly detached a body of troops under the command of Mazares, a Mede, who rapidly marched on Sardis. Arriving there, he found that Pactyas, despairing of success, and dreading the consequences of his treason, had fled to the coast. The revolt was at an end, and the malcontents were easily disarmed. It was determined, however, that the author of the rebellion should not escape with impunity. Pactyas fled first to Cyme, then to Mytilene, and finally to Chios, by the people of which island he was surrendered to the Persians, in exchange for a tract of land on the coast of Asia Minor. He had been previously demanded of the two former States; but the citizens refused to violate the right of asylum—a remarkable instance in early ages of the principle, now generally admitted, that political offenders should not be given up to the vengeance of their foes.

Mazares, and, after his death, his successor Harpagus, another Mede, subsequently carried on a series of operations against the Grecian and other communities of Asia Minor and the adjacent islands, who had given offence by espousing the cause of Pactyas, or whose continued independence was thought to be dangerous to the Persian Empire. Numerous cities were besieged and taken; the people, in several instances, were treated with great severity; while, in others, a tame submission procured the doubtful advantage of foreign protection, combined with some amount of local freedom. The most heroic resistance was that of the Lycians, in the south-west of the peninsula of Asia Minor—a people, distinct from the surrounding populations, who had defied the power of Crœsus, and who are said to have never submitted to an invader. Having been defeated in the open country, they shut themselves up in their two principal cities, Caunus and Xanthus, and, when further resistance became impossible, burned their wives and children, and perished to a man in a desperate conflict with the enemy. Such, at least, is the relation given by Herodotus;* and, even if somewhat coloured, it

* Book I., chap. 176.

is not unlikely to be substantially true. We shall have to consider the fortunes of these interesting communities of Asia Minor more closely when we come to the annals of the great Hellenic race with which they were so intimately associated.

While these events were proceeding in the west, Cyrus himself was gathering fresh laurels in the east. Bactria submitted to his arms, after a courageous struggle, and this remote and semi-barbarous region (now Bokhara) became a part of the Persian monarchy. The people of Bactria were of the same Iranian stock as the Persians themselves, and their land was by some believed to have been the native country of Zoroaster. Whether Bactria had ever been the great and dominant power which tradition asserted may be doubtful; but it is alluded to in an early portion of the Zendavesta as "Bactria with the lofty banner," and it was unquestionably the seat of a rugged and martial race. The Sacæ, whom Cyrus next attacked, and who probably occupied the districts of Central Asia now called Kashgar and Yarkand, were apparently Turanians. Their warlike qualities proved very formidable even to the great Cyrus, and were the means of inflicting on him a temporary defeat. It appears that their women were in the habit of taking the field together with the men, and Ctesias alleges that they could in this way marshal half a million of warriors, in the proportion of 300,000 men to 200,000 women. In an action with the Persians, their king, Amorges, was captured; whereupon his wife, Sparethra, took command of the Sacan forces, and utterly routed those of Cyrus. So many prisoners of note fell to this energetic Amazon that Cyrus was glad to send back Amorges in exchange for them. Nevertheless, the Sacæ were ultimately subdued.

Following up his successes, Cyrus brought under subjection the countries situated between the Caspian, the frontiers of Hindostan, and the steppes of Central Asia. On the Jaxartes he is believed to have built a city named, after him, Cyropolis, and traces of his presence are found in what is now called Afghanistan, in the neighbourhood of the Indus, and in the Great Desert of Khorassan. Some ancient authors record a tradition that he even penetrated into Gedrosia during an expedition against the Indians, and lost his whole army in the barren and sandy wastes; but the relation seems to be of doubtful value. Chronology is unable to assign the dates of these achievements; but they must necessarily have occupied a long period. It was not until 539 B.C. that Cyrus began his march against Babylon, which was taken in the following year. The destruction of the later Chaldæan monarchy added to the Persian Empire the provinces of Babylonia, Susiana, Syria, and Palestine—rich, fertile, and populous tracts, which any ruler might have been proud to own. It also removed the only important rival from the field of Persian greatness. Assyria had passed away for nearly a century; Egypt was no longer a formidable Power; it was only Babylon which represented, with anything like completeness, the glory of the ancient sovereignties. The excuse for attacking Babylon was doubtless the assistance which Nabonidus, the father of Belshazzar, had intended to give to Crœsus of Lydia in his war with the Persian monarch. But Cyrus may also have been influenced in his policy by the wish to possess himself of so splendid and famous a capital as Babylon, that he might either destroy it, or incorporate its visible grandeur, and its long memories of regal and priestly dominion, with his own empire. Still further, he may have been pleased, as an ardent follower of the Dualistic creed of Iran, to strike a heavy blow against the head-quarters of a system of idolatry which had for ages prevailed in that part of Asia. It has even been suggested that the rebellion of Cyrus against Astyages may have arisen out of detestation of those Magian principles and ceremonies which, in Media, had so deeply corrupted the simpler worship of Ormuzd.*

The Dualism of the Persian faith—essentially not much distinguished from Monotheism, since the second Deity was an object of detestation, not of reverence—inclined both Cyrus and his subjects to treat with toleration, and even friendliness, the Jews whom they found in captivity at Babylon. Two years after the fall of the great city—viz., in 536 B.C.—Cyrus issued a decree permitting the return of the Hebrews to their own land. It is quite conceivable that his policy in this respect was not entirely disinterested. Palestine stood between Egypt and the great countries of Western Asia; and Cyrus may have thought it prudent, in case of a revival of Egyptian power, to have a grateful nation planted in that long strip of territory which stretched downwards from Lebanon to the borders of Arabia. But it would be unfair to deny that more generous motives mingled with the calculations of the warrior and the statesman. The Persian monarch was doubtless conscious of an affinity between his own religion and that of the strangers in Babylon; and their case may well have seemed to him worthy of a princely com-

* Rawlinson's Five Great Monarchies: Media, chap. 6.

passion. The Babylonian Jews had now been in captivity for fifty years, during the whole of which time their own country had lain nearly desolate. They had not, indeed, been treated with brutality, and the position of Daniel and his companions at the court of the Chaldæan kings was one of honour and importance. But captivity is none the less captivity, though the fetters be of gold; and the Jews of Babylon, free as they seem to have been to buy lands and build houses, to preserve the records of their genealogies, and to institute some kind of patriarchal government among themselves, were yet aliens in a foreign land—the children of defeat and shame.

Nevertheless, comparatively few availed themselves of the permission to return to their ancestral homes. The more worldly-minded remained; those who were zealous for religion departed on what was to them a matter of duty, as well as a happy privilege. The number of the latter is believed to have been 42,360, together with servants. About 30,000 of these are mentioned in the Old Testament as belonging to the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi. The remainder may have been included in the tribes of Israel, several members of which now mingled with the Jews in the more restricted sense of that word, while others merged themselves in the Samaritans, and became bitter enemies of the pure-blooded Hebrews. Of those who remained under the direct rule of Cyrus and his succesors, probably the larger number adopted the creeds and manners of the communities among whom they found themselves, and so were gradually absorbed and lost. Others, who are known as the Jews of the Dispersion, wandered over various parts of Asia, and also into Egypt, proclaiming their religious convictions, and perhaps occasionally making converts. Under the Greek dominion in Syria, subsequent to the death of Alexander the Great, the Jews spread farther west than they had yet done, and large numbers settled in Cyprus, in the islands of the Ægean, and on the coasts of Asia Minor. Many of these adopted the Greek language, and became to some extent Hellenised in their character, while retaining the ancient faith. The Jewish colony at Alexandria, in the north of Egypt, had a highly intellectual reputation, and offshoots from this stem were largely developed along the whole northern coast of Africa. Some may also have found their way to Abyssinia, where a Jewish element is apparent in the people; and the Hebrew settlement in Rome, after the occupation of Jerusalem by Pompey, in the year 63 B.C., grew in time extremely numerous. From this point, the fortunes of the race pass beyond the bounds of Ancient History, and enter into the separate records of modern nations. During the period of the Babylonish captivity, the Jews appear to have acquired in a still greater degree that exclusive character which the institutions of Moses had encouraged, which their traditions favoured, and which misfortune not unnaturally intensified. As a distinct nationality, they never again became idolaters, though the individual apostates were many.

The Jews who left Babylon under the permissive decree of Cyrus were guided in their progress to the Holy Land by Zerubbabel, the head of one of the tribes of Judah, and Jeshua, grandson of Seraiah, the high-priest whom Nebuchadnezzar put to death. The sacred vessels belonging to the Temple were restored to these leaders, and commendatory letters were sent to the governors of Palestine, directing them to aid in the restoration of the great fane which Solomon had founded, and Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed. Jerusalem was in a state of ruins; but several of the old religious festivals were held around its crumbling walls, and preparations were made for reconstruction. The building of the second Temple was begun in 535 B.C.; but its progress was slow. The Samaritans —who had by this time become semi-heathens— desired to join in the work, and, on being refused permission, did their utmost to frustrate the design. During the remainder of the reign of Cyrus, and for some years longer, the enterprise was completely stopped. In the second year of the reign of Darius Hystaspes, however, the enthusiasm of the Jewish people was again aroused, and, in spite of considerable opposition, the Temple was completed in the sixth year of Darius—viz., in 515 B.C. It was dedicated with much pomp and rejoicing, and Zerubbabel then addressed himself to various matters of internal government. He restored the courses of priests and Levites, and provided for their maintenance; saw to the registering of the returned captives, according to their genealogies; and decreed the keeping of a Passover in the seventh year of Darius. While the Jews were still in captivity, Zerubbabel had been their recognised prince—an office which appears to have been established from the first, and to which Zerubbabel had special claims, as being of royal descent.

Palestine remained under the rule of Persia until the downfall of that empire, in 330 B.C.; but the Jews were always very loyal subjects, and enjoyed no small amount of local freedom. Xerxes, who is now believed to be the Ahasuerus of the Book of Esther (though other conjectures were formerly advanced), acted with great friendliness

towards the Hebrews; yet at one time a persecution of extreme severity was imminent. The king had married Esther, a cousin and ward of Mordecai, one of the tribe of Benjamin employed about the Persian court. Haman, a councillor of the king, having been slighted by this Mordecai, obtained from his royal master an order for the massacre of all the Jews. Esther, however, used her influence with the monarch to such good effect that Haman was put to death instead, and the Jews were invested with the right of self-defence, which they employed with so much energy that, it is said, they slew

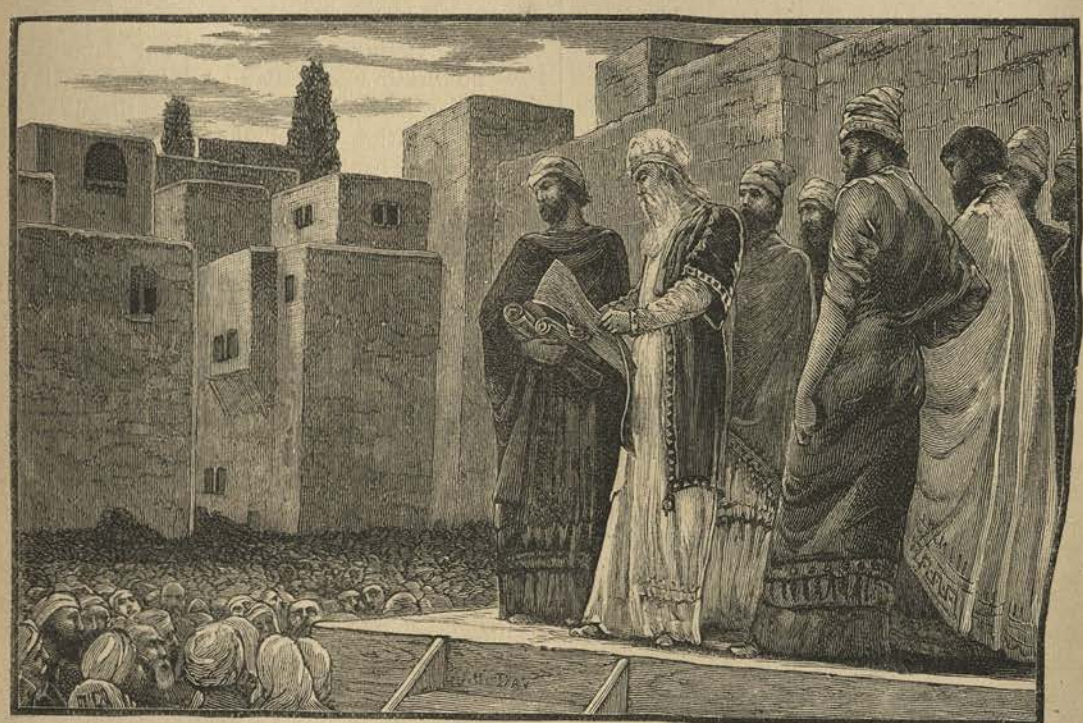
TOMB OF CYRUS.

above 75,000 of their foes.* It is impossible to speak with any certainty as to the date of this event; but if it was really in the reign of Xerxes, it must have been some time between 485 and 465 B.C. Under the rule of Artaxerxes I. (Longimanus), Ezra, Esdras, or Esdra, the priest and scribe, was commissioned to lead back to their own country a further proportion of the Babylonian Jews, and to regulate anew the civil and religious affairs of the nation. This was in 458 B.C. About eighteen hundred persons, including Israelites of all the tribes, together with descendants of the Gibeonites who had cast in their lot with the Hebrews, followed Ezra into the Holy Land, and added to the strength of the population. Ezra was a man of strict Judaical principles, and he persuaded his countrymen to set aside any heathen marriages they had contracted. He was doubtless afraid of the old sin of idolatry again acquiring a hold upon the people.

It would seem that Ezra afterwards returned to Persia, and at a still later date (probably in 445 B.C.) went once more to Jerusalem. On the occasion of his second visit, which lasted several years, he devoted himself to a very important work —a work which has had an immense influence on the principal nations of the earth, and under the effects of which we are still living. The Hebrew Scriptures had long been in a state of great corruption, and existed only in the form of unauthorised copies. It was even believed by the ancient Fathers of the Christian Church that the sacred writings of the Jews were utterly destroyed in the conflagration of Jerusalem during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, and that, on the return of the Hebrews from captivity, in the time of Cyrus, they were wholly reproduced by Ezra, acting under divine inspiration. This is, indeed, distinctly asserted in the second Apocryphal Book of Ezra, which was received as genuine by several members of the early Church. More modern divines, however, allege that, during the reigns of those kings who favoured idolatry, the sacred books were lost; that the copy accidentally discovered in the Temple by Hilkiah, the high-priest, restored to the Jews a knowledge of their per-

* Book of Esther, ix. 6—10—15, 16.

verted faith; that this copy was subsequently burned by Nebuchadnezzar; but that some transcriptions had previously been made, from which Ezra (a descendant of Hilkiah) constructed, by a species of literary editorship, what is now regarded as the authentic text. In the prosecution of his task he found many errors in the several copies, but, according to this view, was able to correct them by a comparison of one transcription with another. However this may have been, the Old Testament is so full of indications of earlier texts—made apparent sometimes in repetitions, and sometimes in a kind of fragmentary incompleteness—that the idea of compilation from a variety of manuscripts is frequently impressed upon the thoughtful reader.



EZRA READING THE LAW TO THE JEWS.

Thus, then, was the canon of Scripture settled by Ezra, who brought together all the books of which the series of priestly writings then consisted, and arranged them in their present order. That he allowed himself some latitude of revision, besides the conjectural restoration of the text, is generally admitted. He divided the books into chapters and verses; suggested a number of various readings and corrections; added illustrative or explanatory sentences wherever they seemed necessary; and changed the ancient names of places for those by which they were known in his day. Such, at least, are the statements of Jewish and other writers, and they have the look of probability. It is also related that he wrote out the Hebrew Scriptures in Chaldee characters, with which, in consequence of their long stay at Babylon, the Jews are said to have been better acquainted than with the ancient Hebrew. Some even go so far as to affirm that when Ezra read the sacred writings to the assembled people, the words were translated into Chaldæan; but this is doubtful, as it is by no means certain that the Jews had at that time entirely lost the knowledge of their own tongue. Nor is it clear that Ezra was the author of the book called after his name, though such is usually supposed to be the case. The Jews attribute to him not only the Book of Ezra, but also the Books of Chronicles, Nehemiah, Esther, Ezekiel, Daniel, and the twelve minor prophets. These, however, are matters with respect to which very different opinions have been held, and which it does not belong to History to discuss.

The mission of Nehemiah to Jerusalem, in 445 B.C., was as much political as religious. Nehemiah, who is supposed to have been a member of the tribe of Judah, held the position of cup-bearer to

the Persian king, Artaxerxes Longimanus—an office of great importance and dignity. Some Jews who had arrived at Susa from Palestine gave so deplorable an account of the state of Jerusalem, and of the Hebrew people—who seem to have benefited but little by the reforming zeal of Ezra—that Nehemiah conceived an ardent wish to visit his ancestral land, with authority to correct abuses. The king's permission was obtained, and he was appointed governor of Judæa, for which he set out accompanied by a troop of cavalry, and taking with him letters of introduction to various satraps and other persons of distinction. One of his principal tasks was to be the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem—a measure necessary to the self-respect of the Jews, and conducive to the security of the Persian Empire itself in the direction of Egypt, then filled with a spirit of insubordination against its foreign masters. The reconstruction was pushed forward with extraordinary vigour and rapidity, although the Moabites and Ammonites, under Sanballat and Tobiah, did their utmost to oppose it. Only by making military arrangements to protect the workmen could Nehemiah pursue his design. Plots were formed against his life; stratagems were devised for getting him away from Jerusalem; and it was sought to bring him into disfavour with the Persian sovereign by insinuating that he designed to set himself up as an independent king when the walls were fully repaired. All these projects were ultimately defeated; but for a time the suspicions of Artaxerxes were aroused, and he issued a decree stopping the work until further orders. Nehemiah shortly afterwards returned to Persia, where he would seem to have cleared himself of the imputed offence; and we find him again at Jerusalem, once more as governor of Judæa, about 433 B.C.

During his second visit to the city of David Nehemiah, it is believed, repaired the Temple and dedicated the walls. He also addressed himself to the reform of malpractices which had by this time attained to rank proportions. Although, some years before, the people had been persuaded by Ezra to enter into a solemn covenant that they would live thenceforward in strict obedience to the law of Moses, they had since adopted a number of customs which moved the indignation of the pious. The Sabbath was frequently violated; marriages with heathen women were again contracted; and even the high-priest, Eliashib, is believed to have offended in this respect. Tobiah the Ammonite, whose hostility to Nehemiah had nearly caused the failure of his first mission, was permitted to dwell within the walls of the Temple. The national worship was conducted with negligence and coldness, and the priests and Levites in Jerusalem were denied their usual revenues. Moreover, the people were oppressed by the rich nobles, who exacted usurious interest on loans, and enslaved the sons and daughters of those who could not pay. Nehemiah redressed these wrongs, and added to his popularity by refusing to receive his lawful allowance as governor, on account of the poverty of his countrymen, and by maintaining at his own expense a table for a hundred and fifty Jews, with a view especially to the succour of those who had returned from Babylon.

Of the closing days of Ezra and Nehemiah we have no certain information; but it is probable that the former died several years before the latter, and Jewish tradition states that he was buried in Persia on the banks of the Euphrates. Few persons occupy a higher place in the estimation of the Hebrew people than Ezra, whose family they trace up to Aaron, and who, because of his services to religion, and his restoration of the sacred text, is sometimes called the second Moses. It is said that among his other principal works was the establishment of the Great Synagogue, and of minor synagogues. In the earlier Jewish ages, it is generally held, there were no regular places of worship, excepting, in the first instance, the Tabernacle, and afterwards the Temple at Jerusalem. Jewish writers, indeed, assert that such was not the case, but that, on the contrary, synagogues existed wherever there were believers. Such, undoubtedly, appears to be the reasonable probability; but the Hebrew Scriptures contain no direct and unequivocal evidence on the subject, and it must therefore be admitted that the point is doubtful. During the various captivities of the Jews and Israelites, however, the deprivation of the use of the Temple may have suggested the necessity of congregating in a number of small buildings suited to the purpose, and the convenience of the practice may have led to its continuance. Accordingly, Ezra, on returning to Jerusalem, ordered the formation of places of worship in various localities, and also, according to the later Jews, instituted a supreme council of a hundred and twenty members, known as the Great Synagogue, of which Ezra himself was the president, and whose office was to settle authoritatively all the ordinances, ceremonials, and customs of religion. How far Rabbinical tradition has exaggerated the power and importance of this body may be an open question; but that some such council existed, seems too likely in itself, to be flatly denied.

Every town containing ten persons, of full age and free condition, always at leisure to assist in divine service, on week-days as well as the Sabbath, was held to be large enough to have a synagogue to itself. The system was considerably extended in the ages succeeding that of Ezra and Nehemiah, and at the Christian era the number of synagogues was very large. It is asserted by Jewish authors that Jerusalem alone had four hundred and eighty. Over the entrance-door was written, "This is the gate of the Lord: the righteous shall enter into it." The inner walls likewise were inscribed with religious sentences, such as — "Remember thy Creator;" "Keep thy foot when thou goest into the house of the Lord;" "Silence is commendable in time of prayer;" and "Prayers without attention are like a body without a soul." The prayers, after a time, grew to inordinate length, and they were followed by the reading of certain portions of Scripture, by an exposition of the law and the prophets, and by discourses on moral and divine subjects, which any person duly instructed in the sacred writings might deliver. When the Jews, having forgotten their native Hebrew, understood nothing but the Chaldæan tongue, these services were still further protracted; for the Scriptures were first read in Hebrew, and afterwards interpreted, paragraph by paragraph, in Chaldee. The officers of the synagogue were numerous, but appear to have been distinct from the sacerdotal order, whose duties were confined to the service of the Temple, and consisted chiefly in the offering up of sacrifices and oblations.

The houses of worship were generally built on high ground, and so constructed as to be superior in height to the private dwellings: if this was neglected in any city, a speedy judgment was denounced against the place. The arrangements of the synagogue were such that the worshippers, as they entered and as they prayed, looked towards Jerusalem. The internal fittings were similar to those in the Tabernacle and the Temple. At the upper end—that nearest to Jerusalem—was the chest containing the Book of the Law. This part was called the sanctuary, and it was here that the chief seats were placed, to which persons of wealth and distinction were invited. Before the sanctuary was an eight-branched lamp, lighted simply on the greater festivals. Only one lamp was kept burning perpetually. Towards the middle of the building rose an elevated platform, in the centre of which was the pulpit, where the lessons were read, and religious instruction was given. Among the worshippers, the men and women were divided from one another by a partition five or six feet high; and in comparatively modern times the women have been more completely separated by being placed in low side-galleries, screened by lattice-work. The synagogues were always roofed over, unlike the *proseuchiæ*, or places of prayer, which were erected in the fields, and lay open to the heavens.*

What is understood by the Scripture history of the Jews is held by Eusebius to terminate in 442 B.C. This, however, would not include the second governorship of Nehemiah, which undoubtedly forms a portion of that history. To the same records, also, belong the denunciations of Malachi, the last of the prophets, whose words constitute the closing book of the Old Testament, exclusive of those apocryphal writings which are, in a greater or lesser degree, set aside by all Protestant churches and communities. The date of Malachi's utterances is very uncertain. Archbishop Ussher places it about 397 B.C. Kennicott, Hales, and Davidson, fix it about 420. However this may have been, the history of Judæa for several years was not very important. The land enjoyed considerable prosperity under the indirect rule of Persia; but a good deal of jealousy existed between the Jews, properly so called, and the hybrid race of Samaria. Sanballat, the governor of the Samaritans—he who had done so much to hinder Nehemiah in the reconstruction of the walls of Jerusalem — erected a temple on Mount Gerizim, in which a Jewish exile was made high-priest; and fierce disputes frequently broke out as to the respective holiness of the rival creeds. After the death of Nehemiah, Judæa was annexed to the province of Cœle-Syria, and the administration of Jewish affairs fell still more into the hands of the high-priests, though the sacerdotal power was of course subordinate, in secular matters, to that of the provincial ruler. The office of high-priest thus became one of so much importance as to be an object of envy and contention. In the reign of Artaxerxes Mnemon, the mitre was worn by Johanan, the grandson of Eliashib, who was opposed by his brother Jesus. The latter made interest with Bagoses, the Persian governor, to obtain the appointment for himself. Bagoses promised his support, and Jesus, relying on the countenance of the great man, quarrelled with Johanan in the Temple, and provoked his brother to such an extent that he slew him in the consecrated edifice itself. For this crime, the Jews were severely punished by Bagoses during a

* Stackhouse's History of the Bible; Smith's Dictionary of the Bible.

period of seven years.* On the whole, however, the Hebrews had little cause to complain of their Persian masters, and there is no happier epoch in their annals than that in which they were the subjects of Cyrus and his successors.

The return of the Jews to their own country, and the events following that memorable circumstance, have taken our attention away from the great Persian monarch and his wonderful career of conquest. There is little more to relate, however, for Cyrus had now done the greater part of his allotted task. The only one of the Babylonian dependencies which did not at once submit to the new ruler of the East was Phœnicia. The people of that interesting land quietly asserted their independence; but Cyrus was too much intent on other enterprises to make any attack on them. The Persian sovereign appears to have considered his dominions threatened by the Massagetæ, a Scythian race lying to the east and north-east of the Sea of Aral. The savage populations of those wild regions—countless in numbers, hardy in constitution, valorous to the utmost degree of heroism, but cursed with a griping poverty, which constantly impelled them to quit their barren and hungry lands for the more favoured south—were a perpetual menace to the great empires established in Western Asia. It can hardly be supposed that Cyrus desired to conquer the country of the Massagetæ for its own sake. He probably wished to anticipate an inroad of the barbarians by striking a blow against them in their strongholds. It was with this view that he crossed the Jaxartes (or some other river in the same general direction), and led his forces into the desert. The account of the expedition given by Herodotus is very circumstantial, but probably adorned with fanciful additions to the truth. It is here stated that the ruler of the Massagetæ at that time was a widowed queen named Tomyris; that Cyrus sent ambassadors to her with proposals of marriage, his real design being to get possession of the country; that Tomyris, in a defiant and threatening message, warned him against any such attempt; and that, by the advice of Crœsus the Lydian (who was still living), the Persians crossed the stream, and attacked the barbarians. After some temporary success, Cyrus was defeated and slain. His body being separated from the rest of the killed, Tomyris took a skin, and, filling it with human blood, dipped the head of Cyrus into it, saying that she had promised to give him his fill of blood, and that she thus made good her words.† The end of Cyrus, however, is involved in much doubt. Xenophon, in the "Cyropædia"—a work to some extent fictitious, but generally allowed to contain a certain amount of history—says that the great Persian hero died peacefully in his bed. The relation of Ctesias is that he was mortally wounded in a battle which he fought with the Derbices (a nation bordering on India), by whom he was defeated, though the victors were soon afterwards compelled to submit. Of the three accounts, this seems the most likely; but the body of the king did not remain in the hands of the foe, for it was buried at Pasargadæ, where the royal tomb is said to have borne the inscription, "I am Cyrus, the son of Cambyses, who founded the Empire of the Persians, and ruled over Asia: grudge me not, then, this monument."

At Murghaub, on the site of the ancient Pasargadæ, a mausoleum is still extant, which answers to the description of the tomb of Cyrus. Seven steps, composed of immense blocks of fine white marble, support a quadrangular cell, covered by a roof with gables, also of white marble. The walls are five feet in thickness; the interior is ten feet long, seven feet wide, and eight feet high; and the marble floor is pierced with holes where the golden sarcophagus of the monarch is believed to have stood. The surrounding pillars, enclosing the neighbouring area, are inscribed, in the Persian and Scythian languages, with the words, "I am Cyrus the King, the Achæmenian." This extraordinary soldier and powerful sovereign had reigned nine-and-twenty years at the time of his death, which occurred in 529 B.C. But the Persian Empire was now made, and the shaping spirit was no longer needed.

* Josephus: Antiquities of the Jews, Book XI., chap. 7, sect. 1.

* Herodotus, Book I., chaps. 201—14.

CHAPTER XX.

THE SUCCESSORS OF CYRUS.

Character of Cyrus and of his Reign—Persian Architecture—Pasargadæ and Persepolis—The Royal Tombs—Succession of Cambyses—Assassination of Smerdis—Conquest of Egypt by Persia—Violent Conduct of Cambyses—Expeditions against Ethiopia and the Oasis of Ammon—Sedition in Persia: the Revolt of the Magi—Death of Cambyses—The Behistun Inscription—Gomates the Magian, the Pseudo-Smerdis—Measures taken by the Impostor—Detection of the Fraud—Darius Hystaspes and his Origin—Conspiracy of Darius and the Six Nobles—Death of the Pseudo-Smerdis and Massacre of the Magians—Story of Prexaspes—Religious Character of Darius Hystaspes—Combination of Dualism with Magism—Beginning of the Reign of Darius.

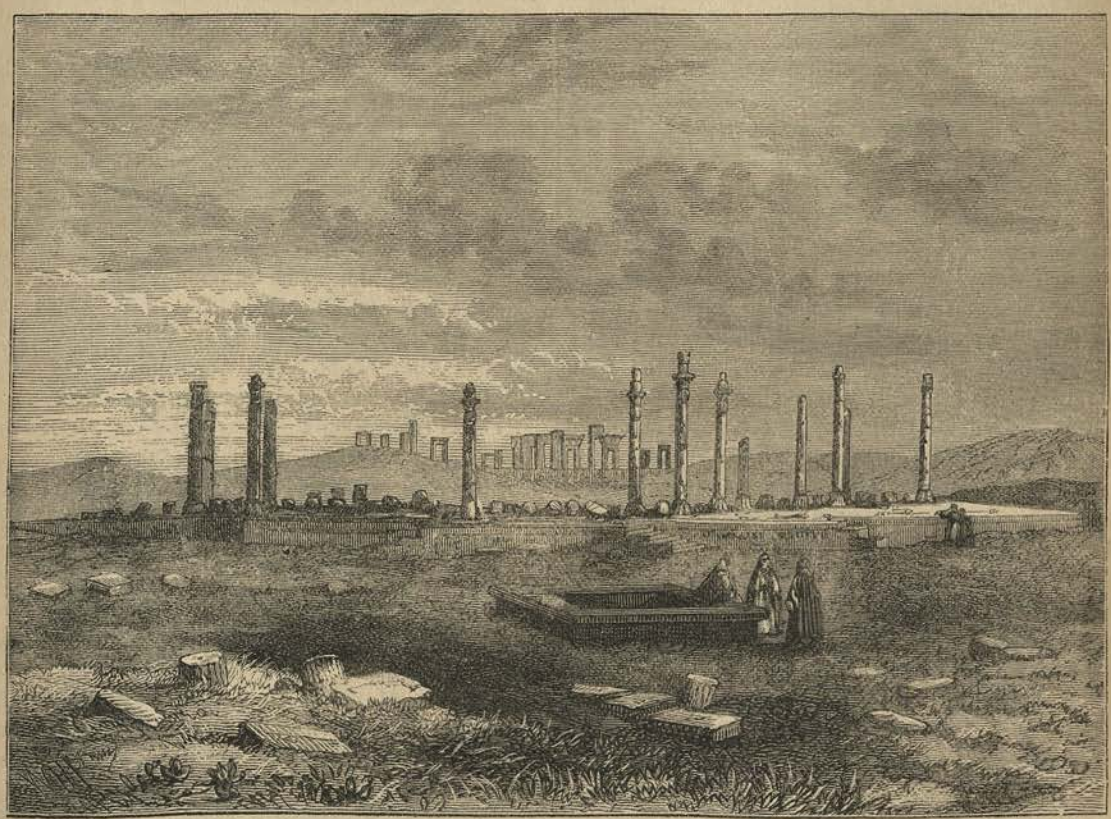
FORTUNATE in all his enterprises, until stricken down by the hand of death in the midst of a temporary defeat, Cyrus was well fitted to be the national hero of his race and country. In the minds of Persians, he soon acquired that semi-mythical character which attaches to Theseus amongst the Greeks, to the Romulus and Remus of the Romans, to the Arthur of British legend, to the Charlemagne of Frankish story, and to other early leaders, who, having really done great things, are credited with greater. Cyrus received from his subjects the affectionate name of "father," while his son, Cambyses, was justly described as a tyrant. The character of Cyrus had indeed many noble elements. Unlike Oriental conquerors generally, the founder of the Persian Empire neither devastated the lands he annexed, nor wasted his gains in licentious pleasures. The first of these statements may perhaps appear to be contradicted by the treatment which Lydia and the Greek colonies of Asia Minor received after the discomfiture of Crœsus. But Cyrus himself was far away in the east at the time of those events, and may not have been cognisant of the particular acts of his lieutenants. Certain it is that on many occasions he exhibited a degree of generosity and forbearance very unusual with the military chieftains of ancient days. He treated his prisoners with clemency, and was open to advice, even when it was opposed to his own foregone conclusions. That his frequent attacks on foreign nations are not to be reconciled with the rules of morality and justice, is sufficiently obvious to the modern mind; but the epoch was one in which the ethics of such questions had not been formulated, and the power to subject others was supposed to confer the right.

So far was his system of government from being rigidly tyrannical, that it was even wanting in centralised force and unity. The provinces which Cyrus conquered were laxly ruled by deputies who were sometimes natives of the countries themselves; and a good deal of local freedom was permitted. This easy toleration may have had its advantages; but it hindered the creation of a grand Imperial system, such as might have welded the component parts into one mass. Cyrus lived with a simplicity which his successors entirely abandoned, and did not affect the proud and stately isolation which is necessary to those who would impose upon the world for gods. If we may accept the stories that are related of him, he had a vivid and apposite way of enforcing and illustrating his ideas, which was very impressive. When he began to form plans for invading Media, and throwing off the yoke of Astyages, he bade a certain number of the Persians (according to the narrative of Herodotus) assemble with their reaping-hooks, and, leading them to a large tract of ground covered with thorns, ordered them to clear it before night-fall. The next day he brought them together again, caused them to lie at their ease on the grass, and entertained them with a sumptuous feast. Finally, he told them that the wearisome and profitless labours of the previous day represented their state of subjection to the Medes, and that the luxury and repose they were then enjoying typified their condition as free and independent men—a condition to which he would lead them, if they were willing to fight under his command. On another occasion, when the Ionian Greeks, having previously refused his overtures, came, after the conquest of Lydia, to offer their submission, Cyrus answered them with a fable. "There was a certain piper," he said, "who was walking one day by the sea-side, when he espied some fish; so he began to pipe to them, imagining they would come out to him upon the land. But, finding his hopes disappointed, he took a casting-net, and, enclosing a great draught of fishes, drew them ashore. The fish then began to leap about; but the piper said, 'A truce to your dancing now, since you did not choose to come and dance when I piped to you.'"* The strict, historical truth

* The authority for both these stories is Herodotus, in that wonderful First Book which contains what may be called the legendary history of Cyrus.

of such anecdotes cannot, of course, be affirmed with confidence; but at any rate they show what was believed of Cyrus less than a hundred years after his death.

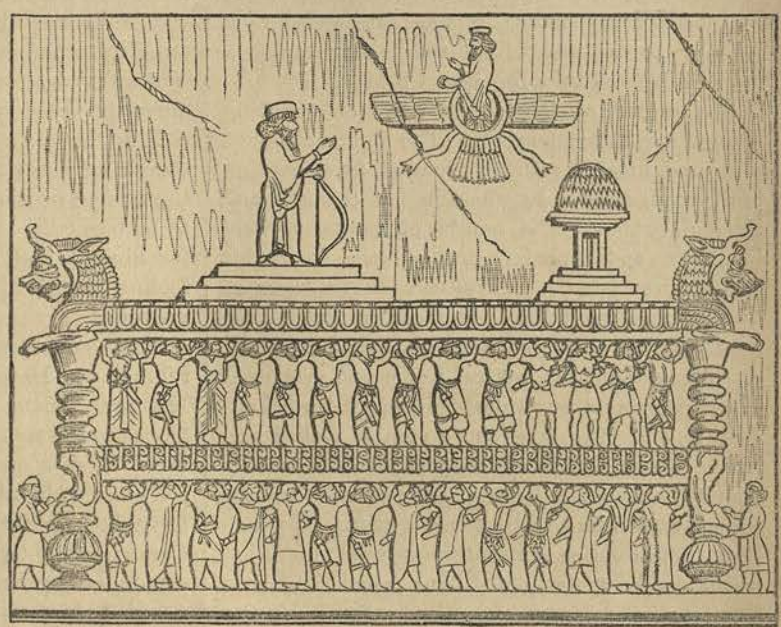
Although so much of his time was occupied by affairs of war, Cyrus paid considerable regard to the arts. His successors, doubtless, surpassed him in pomp and luxury; but the essential characteristics of Persian architecture were fixed in his reign. He had four principal cities: Susa, where he dwelt in the winter; Ecbatana, the place of summer residence; Persepolis, near which were some of the royal tombs; and Pasargadæ, the primitive capital, associated with the religious traditions of the race. The most ancient ruins in Persia are believed to be those at Murghaub, the site of Pasargadæ. It is here that the tomb of Cyrus is still to be seen, while the remains of other buildings serve to illustrate the condition of the structural arts in Persia at the period we are now describing. The style is massive and severe, and the workmanship that of a people far advanced in civilisation. But the most extensive and interesting of Persian ruins are in the vicinity of Persepolis. These belong to a later period than Cyrus—to the reigns of Darius and Xerxes; but the manner, though more highly developed, was apparently the same as that which had existed from the first. It was in fact the Assyrian style, improved and modified, but embracing the leading features of that older form of art. Sculptured slabs, human-headed bulls, bull-headed capitals, and other decorative peculiarities, are to be found in the ruins of Persian cities, as among the excavations of Nineveh; but the propylæa, or detached gateways, were of Egyptian origin. The buildings at Persepolis—and indeed at other places also—stood upon a raised platform, which must have given them great dignity and importance. This artificial eminence consists, in the case of Persepolis, of marble masonry, divided into three terraces, and extending more than four hundred yards from north to south, and about three hundred from east to west. In the days of Persian success, magnificent gateways, splendid halls, and other edifices, rose from the surface of the platform in all the majesty of eastern adornment; and the broken columns, walls, and portals still remaining,



RUINS AT PERSEPOLIS.

impress the spectator with a sense of grandeur not to be exceeded by any other relics of a vanished world.

The most remarkable buildings on the Persepolitan platform (which varies in height from twenty to forty-five feet) are two great pillared halls—one called the Hall of a Hundred Columns, the other the Hall of Xerxes. The roof of the former is believed to have been supported by a hundred pillars, with sixteen additional in the porch; and the effect of the whole, when the structure was perfect, must have been extremely noble, though somewhat wanting in height. Sculptures, depicting the monarch surrounded by his men-at-arms, or by figures supposed to represent natives of the several Persian provinces, appear in various parts of this stately building; and the vast chamber was lighted by fifteen windows, perhaps also by apertures in the roof. The Hall of Xerxes, though containing only forty columns (a number indicated by the native appellation of the building, the *Chehl Minar*), is far more magnificent than the hundred-pillared edifice. It has been remarked by a great modern authority on such subjects that no English cathedral at all approaches the Hall of Xerxes in dimensions, and that neither in France nor Germany is there one that covers so much ground.*



PERSIAN KING WORSHIPPING ORMUZD.†

But the imposing character of the Persepolitan ruins is derived, not so much from any one building as from the aggregate of columns, gateways, sculptures, and other relics, which are grouped irregularly on the far-spreading platform; from the platform itself, rising massively out of the surrounding plain, flanked eastward by a line of rocky hills; and from the immense flights of steps leading from one terrace to another. The height of the steps individually is so slight (at the most, not more than four inches) that horses may be ridden up and down each of the staircases: the width of the principal one being twenty-two feet, ten horsemen might gallop up abreast. Colossal figures of Persian guardsmen, robed, and carrying spears, together with representations of bulls and lions, flank the walls of some of these staircases; and on every side except the east (where the cliff forms boundary sufficient) the platform is enclosed by parapets, constructed of large blocks of stone.

Another feature of that Persian architecture which arose with Cyrus is to be seen in the royal tombs, some of which are very striking. That of Cyrus himself, as already stated, is at Pasargadæ; but many, of a somewhat later date, are found near Persepolis and other places. Most of the Persian royal sepulchres are rock-tombs, like those of Egypt, and are hewn in the sides of mountains at a considerable elevation above the level of the adjacent valley or plain, so as to be the better protected from idle intrusion, though it appears they were also watched by guards. The shape was generally that of a Greek cross, the perpendicular part being intersected about the middle by a horizontal façade of pilasters breaking a flat space of wall, in the centre of which was the doorway. The upper limb of the cross contained a sculptured representation of the deceased monarch worshipping Ormuzd; the lower limb was left plain. Of the doorway, the higher part was filled with the solid cliff, smoothed and fashioned like stonework; beneath this was a small aperture, giving access to the tomb itself, which was hollowed out of the rock. The internal excavations vary

* Fergusson: "The Palaces of Nineveh and Persepolis restored," 1851.

† From the upper part of a tomb at Persepolis.

in different instances, and in some of these places of sepulture there are recesses for several sarcophagi. The sepulchral monuments in the vicinity of Persepolis are more richly ornamented with sculpture than at other places; but they do not equal the magnificence of the royal tombs at Thebes and Memphis. Following a remarkable superstition found amongst many races, the Persians seem to have placed with the dead body several articles supposed to be required for the use of the departed in the next world; which in the case of a king would include sumptuous garments, hangings, and carpets; goblets and collars of gold, daggers and jewellery. When the tomb was a separate building, it was surrounded by a park or grove; and within the enclosure was a house, inhabited by a number of priests.

In the time of Cyrus, the habit of marrying many wives had not arisen. The great conqueror contented himself with one consort (a connection of the royal family), by whom he had two sons and three daughters. The names of the sons were Cambyses and Smerdis; and, shortly before his death, Cyrus left the general control of the empire to the elder of these, while at the same time signifying his wish that Smerdis should have the actual government of several important provinces. The arrangement was well meant, but it turned out disastrously. Cambyses was a man of violent and insane passion, and, becoming jealous of his brother almost immediately after his accession to the throne, caused him to be secretly slain. He then turned his attention to an enterprise which his father had probably contemplated, but which had been abandoned or postponed for other designs. Having first obtained some species of control over the Phœnicians, he resolved to subjugate Egypt, and in 525 B.C. invaded that land at the head of a large army, accompanied along the coast by the fleets of Phœnicia, Cyprus, Ionia, and Æolis. After a brief but desperate resistance, the reigning Pharaoh was overcome, and the Libyans of the neighbouring desert, together with the Greeks of Barca and Cyrene, on the northern coast of Africa, gave in their submission as tributaries. The story of the Persian conquest of Egypt has been related in the Tenth Chapter of this History, and little more need be said as to the extraordinary conduct of Cambyses towards the religious system of the country. It might have been supposed that his outburst of fanaticism was due to the hatred of idolatry which a Persian would naturally feel, were it not for the fact that at first he showed great respect to the national deities. The probability, therefore, seems to be that he was visited with a species of frenzy, consequent on the failure of three schemes of conquest in Africa, and that he revenged himself for his disappointment by outraging the dearest feelings of the Egyptians, whom he suspected of rejoicing at his misfortunes. Besides the violence done to several of the great public monuments, the wounding of the sacred bull, and the scourging of the priests, Cambyses performed many other acts which excited against him the utmost horror and indignation on the part of his new subjects. He decreed the punishment of death against any one who should join in the festival of Apis. He opened sepulchres, and examined the bodies of the dead. Making his way into the chief sanctuary at Memphis, he publicly scoffed at the image of Ptah (the Egyptian Vulcan), which was certainly fantastic enough to move the derision of any one accustomed from his childhood to an exalted form of Theism. The temple of the Cabiri was similarly violated, and the images of those mysterious gods were ordered to be burned. It was thus that Cambyses laid up for himself and his successors a store of wrathful feelings, which his father would not have needlessly provoked.

The worst stories with regard to Cambyses are related by Herodotus in the Third Book of his History. Some of these were probably derived from the information of Egyptian priests, and may have been strongly coloured by national and religious animosity. But they are not likely to have been entirely false, and from all we know of Cambyses we have reason to believe that he was cruel and depraved. According to Herodotus, he married his sister—a thing abhorrent to the Persians, though considered commendable by the Egyptians. Wishing to obtain some sort of authorisation for so unwonted a union, he summoned the royal judges, and asked if there was any law affecting the case. They answered that they could find no law sanctioning the marriage of a brother with a sister, but that they had discovered one permitting the sovereign of Persia to do whatever he pleased. Cambyses, therefore, married this sister, and afterwards another, whom he is said to have kicked to death, in anger at a speech in which she had referred to the assassination of Smerdis. On another occasion, he shot a boy to the heart, in order to show the accuracy of his sight, and to prove that he was not out of his mind, as some had asserted; then, calling the boy's father to him, he asked if he ever saw a man take so true an aim. "Sir," said the unhappy parent, fearful of making any fitter reply, "I believe that a god himself could not have shot so well."

Twelve Persians of high rank he buried alive up to the head, without any just cause; he endeavoured to kill Crœsus the Lydian, for warning him against the consequences of such wild ferocity; and, having flayed alive a judge who had offended him, he nailed his skin on the judgment-seat, and appointed his son to the office, bidding him remember where he sat. Such, at least, are the tales which antiquity has left us concerning this monarch; and it is certain that his memory was not merely detested by the Egyptians, but disliked by his own subjects. The former declared that the gods had smitten him with madness, on account of his impiety in the cities of the Nile. He may not have been mad in the absolute sense of the word; but that he was to some extent insane with bad passions and self-will, like many another despot, seems undeniable. It is said that even from infancy he was afflicted with epileptic attacks, and his natural infirmities were increased by habits of intoxication. The results could hardly have been otherwise than frightful.

The three unsuccessful projects of Cambyses, to which reference has been made as possibly exasperating the mind of the Persian king against the Egyptians, require some specific notice. The first was directed against the Carthaginians, but was stopped at the very beginning by the refusal of the Phœnicians to give the aid of their fleet, Carthage having been originally a colony from Phœnicia, with which friendly relations had always been maintained. For the second expedition, which was against Ethiopia, Cambyses prepared by sending spies into the country, who returned with a marvellous report of what they had seen, and a defiant message. The Persian king was so much incensed at the haughty spirit of the Ethiopians that he immediately marched in person against their territory, but without making due provision for the subsistence of his army. The small amount of food which the soldiers took with them was exhausted before they had accomplished a fifth part of the way; the beasts of burden were then consumed; and, when this supply ran out, life was supported by such herbs as could be found. Cambyses still pushed on, probably not being fully aware of the difficulties towards which he was advancing. The sandy desert was at length reached, and the miserable soldiers were compelled in their desperation to cast lots for killing and eating one another. When the knowledge of this fact reached Cambyses, he was so horrified that he at once abandoned the enterprise, and marched back to Thebes, which he reached with the loss of a considerable portion of his army. At a subsequent period, however, part of Ethiopia was subdued.

The third disappointment which Cambyses had to suffer was in connection with a meditated attack on the people inhabiting the Oasis of Ammon, lying to the west of Egypt. To this end, he detached fifty thousand men from the army with which he was himself marching against the Ethiopians (probably in 524 B.C.), and instructed them to reduce the Ammonians to slavery, and to burn the oracular temple of Jupiter for which the Libyan desert was celebrated. They set forth on their mission, and are believed to have reached the Great Oasis, called by the Greeks the Island of the Blessed—a beautiful spot of verdure, situated in the midst of barren sands, about seven days' march from Thebes. It is probable that, after resting here for some time, they endeavoured to push on to the settlement which they had been ordered to attack, but that (as the Ammonians afterwards reported) they were overwhelmed by heaps of sand, blown by a violent south wind. At any rate, they disappeared, neither succeeding in their design, nor returning to the place from which they had set out.

After venting his mortification in the series of outrages to which reference has been made—outrages probably exaggerated by the subsequent reports of Egyptian priests, but doubtless not wholly invented—Cambyses determined to place Egypt under the rule of a viceroy, and return to Persia, from which he had been absent about three years. While passing through Syria, and halting at a town which Herodotus says was called Ecbatana, and which may perhaps have been situated on Mount Carmel, a herald, entering the camp, made proclamation to the army that Cambyses had been deposed, and that Smerdis, the son of Cyrus, reigned in his stead. The news was startling, and seemed to indicate that Smerdis had not really been put to death, as the king had ordered, but had been kept in concealment until it was considered that a fitting opportunity had arrived for setting him on the throne. The person to whom the assassination of the younger brother had been entrusted was a nobleman named Prexaspes—the same whose child was afterwards so wantonly slain by Cambyses. Prexaspes assured the king that he had been faithful to his mission, and suggested that the rival monarch was an impostor named Gomates, whose brother had been charged with the government of the palace in the absence of the sovereign. This Gomates bore a remarkable resemblance to the dead Smerdis, and may on that account have been tempted to assume his

personality. Smerdis had been killed in so secret a manner that the precise nature of his death is unknown; and this element of mystery inclined the Persians to doubt his fate, and to believe that he had again come among them.

The movement of Gomates was still further assisted by a strong feeling of discontent with Cambyses, which had been growing up among the great majority of the Medes, and a considerable number of the Persians also. Those who followed Magism regarded the house of Cyrus as too favourable to the old Aryan belief. Cambyses, it is true, had shown less of this spirit than his father, and was not a zealot in any sense of the word. Still, he could hardly be counted among the friends of Magism, and his contempt for idolatry would always, taken in conjuction with his ancestry, incline him rather to the pure abstractions of the Zendavesta than to the lower forms of fire-worship. Gomates was a Magian, and Magism had by this time spread much among the Persians, to say nothing of the Medes, who had adopted it for a long while. It is evident, from the scattered notices of this sedition which have come down to us, that Gomates (who, though a Magian, was also a Persian) destroyed the temples of the national faith, and it is probable that he forbade the ancient worship. The rites and ceremonies of the fire-worshippers were widely introduced, and Magian priests were established as the sacerdotal caste. Thus the treason of Gomates possessed a religious as well as a political character. But the people believed they had the true Smerdis on the throne, and were not offended at the changes which he brought.

The death of Cambyses is as obscure as that of Cyrus. The account given by Herodotus is to the effect that he resolved to march against the usurper, but that in mounting his horse he inflicted a mortal wound on himself with his sword, from which the scabbard had accidentally dropped off. The Egyptians were not slow to point out that this injury was in the thigh—the very place where Cambyses had stabbed the sacred bull, Apis. Finding himself seriously hurt, the king asked the name of the place where he then was; and on being told that it was called Ecbatana, he remembered a prophecy that he should die at Ecbatana, by which he had supposed the Median capital to be meant. The real intent of the oracle was now apparent, and he exclaimed, "Here, then, it is fated that Cambyses, the son of Cyrus, should die." He lingered, however, for twenty days, and then expired in consequence of the wound mortifying. Previously to the end, he confessed to his chiefs and nobles the crime he had committed against his brother Smerdis, and bound them by a menaced imprecation to use every exertion for the defeat of the impostor who had momentarily assumed the regal power. Such is the report of Herodotus.* Ctesias also relates that Cambyses died of an accidental wound, but adds that it occurred while he was carving wood for his amusement at Babylon.

Probably, neither of these accounts is correct: at any rate, both are contradicted by a piece of evidence which must be received as of some value. At Behistun, in the Zagros chain of mountains, near the road from Babylon to the Ecbatana of Southern Media, is a precipitous rock, rising to a height of one thousand seven hundred feet. Three hundred feet above the base of this rock is a large bas-relief, representing captives brought before the king; and in association with the sculptures are certain inscriptions, written in the cuneiform character, in parallel columns, and in three distinct languages—the old Persian, the Babylonian, and the Turanian, or that which was spoken by the Scythian aborigines of Media. From the height of the bas-reliefs and inscriptions, it is obvious that a scaffolding must have been erected against the face of the cliff, to enable the artificers to perform their work; and the utmost care was evidently taken to ensure the perpetuity of the record. The rugged surface of the stone was first smoothed to a level, and, in defective places, fragments were artificially let in, and fastened with molten lead, so that the difference is apparent only on a close examination. The letters are above an inch in length, very beautifully executed, and covered by a silicious glaze, much harder than the limestone rock beneath. Some portions of this glaze have been washed away by the rain of many centuries, and lie at the foot of the cliff in flakes like lava; but for the most part the varnish has remained, and saved the sculpture and the writing from destruction.† In 1838–46, these writings were with much difficulty deciphered by Colonel Sir Henry Rawlinson, who referred them to the fifth or sixth year of Darius, 516 or 515 B.C. From the allusion to the death of Cambyses, it would seem that, on hearing of the treason of Gomates, the king committed suicide by stabbing himself with his sword; though it must be admitted that the words employed are not free from ambiguity,

* Book III., chaps. 64–6.

† Diodorus Siculus states that Semiramis, on her march from Babylon to Ecbatana, had her own likeness, and the effigies of her guards to the number of a hundred, engraved on this rock, together with an inscription. But, if so, every vestige of the work has disappeared.

and have been variously interpreted. Still, nothing is said about an accidental wound; and, considering the violent character of Cambyses, the disappointments he had endured in Egypt, the loss of a large part of his army in fruitless expeditions, the success of a rival in Persia, and the doubt that must have possessed his mind as to whether he had the means of re-establishing his fortunes, it is not improbable that this creature of impulse and of passion put an end to his own existence. His death, however brought about, took place in 522 B.C., after a reign of seven years and five months.

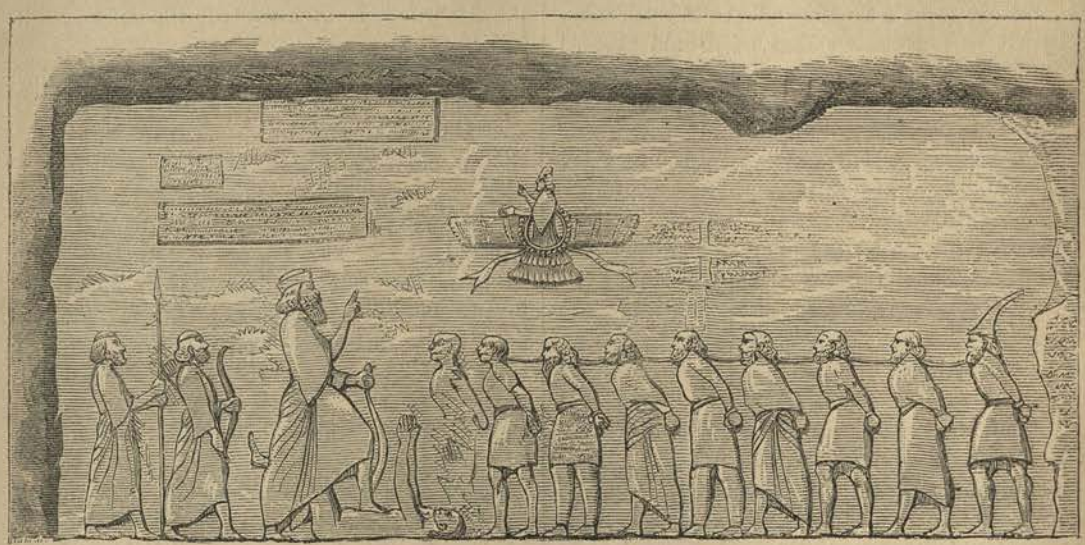
In the meanwhile, the Pseudo-Smerdis in Persia matured his plans without interruption. His main supporters were the Magian priests; but, as one professing to be a member of the Achæmenian dynasty, it was necessary that he should proceed with caution in all matters respecting the old religion, lest his assumed identity should be questioned. It was not until he had obtained a firm hold of the sceptre that Gomates ventured on those changes which had for their object the establishment of Magism. But it was doubtless understood from the first, amongst the leaders of the interested sect, that such should be the ultimate result of the revolution. Other measures of policy were not wanting. In Eastern countries it has always been usual for usurpers to take to themselves the wives of their predecessors. This was done by Gomates; but, fearing that some of these princesses were probably acquainted with the personal appearance of the murdered Smerdis, he introduced into the seraglio a system of complete isolation as regards each inmate, instead of those habits of free intercourse which had formerly prevailed. The person to be specially guarded against was Atossa, the sister and wife of Cambyses, and therefore the sister of Smerdis, who must have known that her second husband was not that prince. The methods adopted by Gomates effectually prevented her imparting this knowledge to any of the other wives; but Herodotus tells a singular story, according to which it would appear that the fact was discovered by one of the princesses named Phædyma, the daughter of Otanes, a Persian of high rank. It was within the knowledge of Otanes that the ears of Gomates had been cut off for some great offence, and he directed his daughter to ascertain whether the Pseudo-Smerdis had been mutilated in this way. At considerable risk to herself, Phædyma examined the head of her husband when he was asleep, and, finding that he had no ears, made her father acquainted with the fact. This discovery led to the downfall of the impostor; but its effect was not immediate. As regards the mass of the people, they appear to have accepted the rule of Gomates with that ready obedience which is common with Asiatics when a man of strong will and courage has laid his hand upon the helm. The usurper, moreover, was not neglectful of appeals to popularity. He began his reign by a general remission of tribute and military service for three years, and he ruled the subject provinces in a way that was likely to conciliate the feelings of people who had lost their independence. In one respect, indeed, he acted in a different spirit, for he reversed the decree of Cyrus which permitted the Jews to continue the rebuilding of the Temple. But it must be recollected that, in proportion as this act offended the Hebrews, it satisfied the Samaritans, whose jealousy it favoured.

Nevertheless, Gomates must have felt, during the whole of his short reign, that the imposture was not unlikely to be detected, and that detection would assuredly be followed by death. His fears were perpetual; his distrust permitted him no freedom; he never quitted the palace, nor suffered any of the Persian nobles to come into his presence. It was this circumstance which first aroused the suspicion of Otanes that he was not the true Smerdis. Yet, even after the inhabitants of Persia Proper had been offended by the outrages on their ancient faith, the people of the subject nations, who were doubtless more numerous in the aggregate, revered the ruling king as a monarch of singular benevolence, and were therefore not anxious to subvert his throne. The Medes, in particular, were delighted with a prince who gave religious predominance throughout the empire to those principles of fire-worship which they themselves regarded with so much favour. Many even of the Persians, as already set forth, had adopted the Magian creed; and as the new king, whether he were Smerdis or any one else, was undoubtedly a Persian, their sense of national predominance was not wounded by his success.

At length, however,—either as a consequence of the discovery said to have been made by Otanes, or as a natural result of the secrecy in which the king lived,—rumours begun to spread abroad as to the identity of this mysterious being described as Smerdis, the son of Cyrus, whom most persons believed had been slain by Cambyses. The impostor, warned as to what men were talking about, punished all such comments with extreme severity. For a time they were silenced through dread of the consequences; but some of the principal nobles, being convinced of the fraud that had been practised, held private counsel, and considered

the measures demanded by so extraordinary a situation. The conspirators were at first only six in number, of whom Otanes was the leading spirit. They appear to have entered into communication with Darius, the son of Hystaspes, a prince of the blood-royal, who, in default of any issue by Cambyses (and Cambyses was known to have died childless), was probably the direct heir to the throne. Darius was now about twenty-eight years of age, and eight years before, while still a youth, had been suspected by Cyrus of a design to seize the regal power. One of the poetical stories with which the great work of Herodotus abounds, and which are so intimately identified with the life of antiquity that even their mythical character cannot entirely exclude them from historic annals, is to the effect that Cyrus, when marching to attack the Massagetæ, saw in his sleep the eldest son of Hystaspes with wings on his shoulders, one of which overshadowed Asia, and the other Europe. Cyrus, it is added, was so impressed with this vision that he summoned Hystaspes to his presence, and told him privately that his son had been detected plotting against the throne. On this account he bade Hystaspes return to Persia with all speed, and take care to produce his son for examination after the close of the campaign. Cyrus, as we have seen, perished in his encounter with the Scythian amazon, and it is quite conceivable that Darius, on hearing from his father what had been suspected as to his designs, may have formed a project not previously familiar to his thoughts.

Hystaspes was still living when the conspirators against the Pseudo-Smerdis entered into communication with his son. He occupied the position of governor of Persia Proper, but probably considered himself too old to struggle with the impostor in his own city. What that city was, is by no means certain. Herodotus speaks of Susa as the place from which the Magian governed; but the fact appears doubtful, and a high authority is of opinion that Cyrus, Cambyses, and the Pseudo-Smerdis, resided principally at Ecbatana.* When Darius arrived at the capital, he found a certain degree of hesitation among the conspirators. He himself was in favour of immediate action; but Otanes advised that they should proceed with caution, and obtain a greater number of adherents before venturing on any attempt. In the end, however, the bold counsels of Darius prevailed over the timidity of his associates, and the party, having armed themselves, proceeded at once to the palace. Although, as a rule, Gomates was closely guarded, the soldiers did not dare to deny a passage to men of such high position as Darius and the six nobles. Nevertheless, on reaching the great hall, they found their further progress stopped by the eunuchs in attendance on the monarch, and it seemed for a moment as if the design would have been frustrated. But the conspirators, drawing their daggers, stabbed all who ventured to oppose their passage, and, having thus cleared the way,



MONUMENT OF CAMBYSES AT BEHISTUN.

* Professor Rawlinson: Five Great Monarchies, chap. 7 of "Persia."

rushed on into the inner apartment. Gomates and one of the Magi were sitting there in consultation at the moment, and, seeing the eunuchs in confusion, put themselves on the defensive. A short and sharp struggle ensued, during which two of the nobles were wounded. The usurper then fled into a chamber adjoining the men's apartment, and tried to shut to the door; but Darius, and one of the nobles named Gobryas, rushed in with him. Gobryas at once closed with Gomates, while Darius stood in some perplexity, for the room was rather dark, and he feared lest he should strike his friend instead of his opponent. The former asked him why he did not use his weapon. Darius replied, "For fear I should injure you." "Drive your sword through both of us!" exclaimed the heroic noble. Darius made a thrust with his dagger, and fortunately struck only the Pseudo-Smerdis. The head of the impostor was speedily cut off, together with that of the Magus, and five out of the seven assailants, leaving their two wounded companions behind them, sallied forth into the streets, and roused the people. A dreadful slaughter of the Magi followed, and the Persians long continued to celebrate their deliverance by an annual festival, during which all the Magi were kept strictly confined to their houses, and not permitted to be seen in public for five days.

THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN GOMATES AND GOBRYAS.

In relating these remarkable events, Herodotus calls the usurper Smerdis, instead of Gomates.*

* Book III., chaps. 78—9.

His narrative is substantially correct, for the brief account of the catastrophe contained in the Behistun Inscription is to the same general purpose. According to this official record, however, Gomates was not slain in his palace or his capital, but met his death in a small fort in the Nisæan plain, a district of Media, where he had fled with a number of followers. The name of the fort was Sictachotes, and it is not improbable, from the remote situation of the place, that an insurrection had already commenced in the capital, and that Gomates had found it necessary to establish himself in a position where he might be better able to resist the progress of sedition. The massacre of the Pseudo-Smerdis and the Magi took place, apparently, about 522 B.C., and the reign of the usurper is thought to have lasted not more than seven months. Darius, in the writing that he has left us on the rock at Behistun, takes credit to himself that no one dared to say anything concerning Gomates the Magian until *he* arrived. Herodotus affirms that the son of Hystaspes was aware of the imposture, and supposed that the knowledge was confined to himself. That it was known to some others, however, seems extremely probable, and it is not likely that there was so complete an absence of all movement against the usurper as Darius, for his own glory, has alleged. Yet it was doubtless his genius and resolution which gave direction and energy to the lurking discontent, and he succeeded to supreme power, not merely by right of his relationship to the great Cyrus, but also by the plain evidence of facts that he was the fittest man to rule the nation. Nevertheless, there was an intermediate period of discussion as to who should conduct the government of the country, and the accession of Darius to the throne is believed not to have taken place until the 1st of January, 521 B.C. If this discussion occurred after the death of Gomates, it could not have extended over many days, and it is even possible that the whole arrangement may have been settled before the attack on the false Smerdis commenced. The six conspirators demanded certain privileges for themselves, and these were of course conceded. The new king undertook to choose his wives entirely from the families of these nobles, who were doubtless the heads of great clans, and who now required that they might have free access to the royal person at all times, without asking permission. Otanes secured peculiar honours and advantages; and something of an aristocratical principle was thus introduced into the constitution of the country, instead of the pure despotism which had been administered by Cyrus and Cambyses.

Herodotus relates an episode of the conspiracy against Gomates, which, improbable though it is, should not be omitted. He states that while Darius and the six nobles were forming their plans, the impostor, and his adherents among the Magi, determined to make Prexaspes their friend, partly because he was in high repute among the Persians, and partly from the fact that he to whom the assassination of Smerdis had been entrusted would have the greatest influence with the people, if he could be induced to come forward, and state that Smerdis, so far from being dead, was at that moment occupying the throne. Gomates accordingly sent for this man, and with many promises of friendship exhorted him to favour his pretensions. Prexaspes promised that he would do so, and was then requested to ascend a turret, and harangue the people below. When a sufficient number of persons were assembled, Prexaspes began his address, but, to the confusion of Gomates and his courtiers, declared the whole truth, assuring them that he had been compelled by Cambyses to put Smerdis to death, and that the person then reigning was not the son of Cyrus. He threatened the Persians with many misfortunes if they should fail to recover the sovereign power for the family to which it rightfully belonged, and, having exhorted them to punish the Magi for their treason, threw himself from the tower, and died at its foot. The seven Persians, while on their way to attack Gomates, heard of this incident, and Otanes, together with some of the others, saw in it a further reason for delay, which, however, Darius and the bolder spirits overruled.

In the celebrated writing at Behistun, Darius religiously ascribes his success to the favour of Ormuzd. He was undoubtedly a devotee of the old Persian faith, and he lost no time in restoring those temples which Gomates had overthrown, and in re-establishing the forbidden rites. The fury with which the Magian priests were attacked, and the immense slaughter effected in the crisis of the revolution, indicate that the spirit of intolerance was not wanting in this monarch. The Behistun Inscription strongly exhorts the successors of Darius to put to death all "liars," meaning, no doubt, all who did not accept what the king himself esteemed the orthodox belief. The spirit of friendliness towards the Jews, which Cyrus had shown some years before, was again manifested by Darius Hystaspes, and the rebuilding of the Temple at Jerusalem was resumed with his express permission. The interference of the Samaritans was strictly forbidden, and Ezra records that a further

grant of money, cattle, corn, and other things, was made by Darius out of the royal stores, for the furtherance of an undertaking in which the Jews were so much interested. The affinity between Persian Theism and Jewish Theism has before been pointed out. When Gomates the Magian exercised supreme power in the Persian Empire, the rebuilding of the Temple was suspended; for Gomates, being an idolater, had no affection for the religious system of the Hebrews. Darius, on the other hand, was a professor of that faith which had long been dear to the Persians, and which was certainly as distinct from idolatry as any system that the world has ever known. The Jews accordingly felt the benefit of the change; but it may be questioned whether the majority of the king's subjects were not rather offended than pleased by the altered condition of affairs. Magism had spread widely and penetrated deeply in that part of Asia, and the massacre of the priests seems to have had no effect in checking it. The ancient religion of Iran was clearly dying out. Even the zeal, resolution, and intellectual power of Darius Hystaspes could not save it from extinction; for the people generally were ripe for another creed, differing to some extent from the old system of the fire-worshippers, but also in an equal degree from that which Darius regarded as a divine revelation. It may be that the faith which the Aryans had brought with them into Persia was too simple and exalted for communities who had succeeded to Imperial power, and who required a more imposing ritual than had satisfied their primitive ancestors. However this may be, it is certain that the principles of fire-worship continued to make progress, even under the adverse rule of Darius, and that, although the creed of Dualism was professed at court, and by the most eminent of the Persian nobles, it was not very largely accepted by the commonalty in the epoch with which we are now concerned. This, it will be recollected, was the era of the second Zoroaster, and the object of that reformer was to combine something of Magism with something of Dualism. The result could not have been agreeable to Darius; but he was powerless to prevent it.

The name of Darius comes to us, like other Persian names of that period, through a Greek channel; but it has not been greatly altered from the original. The native form of the name is Darayavush, which is believed to signify "the restrainer." The descent of this particular Darius is traced from the second son of Teïspes, the son of Achæmenes, as Cyrus had proceeded from the eldest son. Following the example of the Pseudo-Smerdis, and the general habit of eastern nations in such matters, Darius, on succeeding to the crown, married Atossa, who in the first instance had been the wife of Cambyses. When Xerxes was born to Darius, the two lines of the Achæmenian family were united in his person, and a possible source of disturbance was thus removed. Hystaspes, the father of Darius, survived the elevation of his son to regal power. He was at that time old, and was probably content to see the supreme direction of affairs in the hands of a younger and more vigorous man. The provincial government of Persis, or Persia Proper, was still retained by him, and in this capacity he is mentioned in the Behistun Inscription. Darius commenced his reign under very favourable circumstanees. He had the merit of a great success—a merit very generally acknowledged in all parts of the earth, but especially in Asia. Moreover, he was the genuine representative of that royal house which had delivered Persia from the domination of the Medes, and had built up one of the greatest empires ever known to the world. The Persian realm now extended from Sogdiana, and the rivers Jaxartes and Indus, in the east, to the Hellespont and the coast of Syria in the west; from the Scythian deserts in the north to the confines of Egypt in the south. An immense and varied region, peopled by a great number of different races—a kingdom which inherited much of the glory of older monarchies in that quarter of the world, but which in itself possessed the splendid energies of youth—was at the command of this enterprising prince. Yet it was in fact a collection of detached masses, loosely held together; and the genius of Darius was needed to give it unity and form.

CHAPTER XXI.

PERSIA FROM DARIUS I. TO DARIUS III.

Ill-organised State of Persia—Revolts in Elam and Babylonia—Risings in Media, Armenia, Assyria, and other Provinces—Conspiracy in Persia against the Power of Darius—Insubordination of Orœtes, Governor of Lydia, &c.—Further Rebellions—Reorganisation of the Government—The Satrapial System—Condition of the Provinces—The King's "Eyes" and "Ears"—Taxation; Couriers; Coinage—Persian Laws and Customs—Architectural Works of Darius I.—Expeditions to Samos and Western India—Invasion of Scythia—Conquests of Darius I. in Europe—Accession of Xerxes—Reign of Artaxerxes—Disturbed Condition of Persia under Darius Nothus—Terituchmes and Amestris—Reign of Artaxerxes Mnemon—Conspiracy of Cyrus, the Son of Darius Nothus—Foreign and Domestic Troubles—Vigorous Rule of Artaxerxes Ochus—Conspiracy of Bagôas the Eunuch—Accession of Darius Codomannus—General Character of the Asiatic Monarchies.

ASCENDING the throne in 521 B.C., Darius I. swayed the destinies of Persia for six-and-thirty years, and they were years of changeful fortune. At first, indeed, it was doubtful whether the new king would be able to establish permanently the power he had wrested from Gomates the Magian. That impostor had his friends and adherents in most parts of the realm, and the violent revolution by which Darius gained his ends was threatened by a number of counter-movements of a formidable character. The kingdom, as we have said, was very loosely knit together. The central power was weak, so far as the ordinary operations of government were concerned, although the military force which could be directed against any point was vast. As long as affairs went on quietly at the capital, the provinces yielded a ready obedience; but if any doubt arose as to who was at the head of the State, the machinery of administration seems to have been paralysed, and the subject nations began to dream of freedom. This was the case at the beginning of the reign of Darius Hystaspes. A spirit of insubordination passed over the wide dominions comprised under the general designation of Persia, and to many it may have seemed that the huge compound mass was about to be resolved into its elements.

The first rising against the authority of Darius was in Susiana—the Elam of the Bible, a province lying east of Babylonia, and north of Persia Proper. In the time of Abraham, the Elamites (who were of Semitic origin) were the chief power in Lower Mesopotamia; but their predominance did not long continue, and, after being overshadowed by the greater might of Assyria and Babylonia, they passed under the rule of Cyrus. Memories of former greatness may have suggested an effort to recover their freedom, and the recent changes in the government of Persia may have seemed to offer a favourable opportunity for the attempt. A man named Atrines announced himself as king, and at once received the popular support. About the same time, a revolt occurred at Babylon, where a pretender to the throne asserted that he was a son of the late king, Nabonidus. This person assumed the famous name of Nebuchadnezzar, and it may be that he was actually related to the old royal family. The insurrection in Susiana appearing the less important of the two, Darius sent one of his lieutenants to act in that quarter, while he himself proceeded against the claimant to the Babylonian throne. He found a naval force drawn up in the Tigris, ready to dispute his passage, and an army posted on the opposite, or western, shore. Nevertheless, he crossed the stream, and defeated the troops by whom he was opposed. On the road to Babylon itself, he was again encountered by the enemy, who gave him renewed battle at a small town on the eastern bank of the Euphrates. The Babylonians, however, were once more defeated, and the rout was so disastrous that most of the insurgents were driven into the river. The leader of the movement escaped with a few horsemen, and shut himself up in Babylon, where, on the city being taken after a short resistance, he was executed. If we are to believe Herodotus, the place was captured through the contrivance of one Zopyrus, a Persian, who, after inflicting on himself a number of horrible mutilations, obtained admission into Babylon, and the command of the army, under a false pretence of having been maltreated by Darius.* But the truth of the story is very doubtful. The same authority also states that Darius, on gaining possession of the city, opened the tomb of Nitocris in the hope of finding treasure, and desired to take away the golden statue of Belus, which stood within the precincts of one of the temples, but was afraid to carry out his project.† However, he impaled three thousand of the chief citizens, and destroyed the walls and gates.

* Book III., chaps. 150—59.
† Book I., chaps. 187 and 183.

The disturbance in Susiana was suppressed without much difficulty. Atrines was made prisoner, brought before Darius when on his march to Babylon, and put to death. But shortly afterwards another adventurer arose, and renewed the struggle. A Persian called Martes took the name of one of the old Elamite kings, appealed to the national sentiment of the people, and defied the power of Darius. The reduction of Babylon, however, enabled the Persian sovereign to march in person to the capital of Susiana, before reaching which the people themselves, alarmed at the reports of his approach, had turned on the pretender, and slain him. This trouble was speedily followed by revolts in Media, Armenia, and Assyria, the inhabitants of which acted in concert under the guidance of a leader calling himself Xathrites, and claiming descent from Cyaxares, the real founder of the Median Empire. The movement was evidently one of much gravity, and Darius, establishing himself at Babylon, despatched three of his generals into the affected districts. Not at all daunted by the forces sent against him, Xathrites gave battle to his opponents, and appears to have maintained his ground. Though possibly defeated on some occasions, he was far from subdued, and his cause, on the whole, looked so prosperous that Hyrcania and Parthia, to the south-east of the Caspian, joined the insurgents. Darius was roused to special efforts, and proceeded himself to the scene of conflict in Media, where he defeated the pretender in a decisive engagement. Xathrites (whose real name seems to have been Phraortes) fled in an easterly direction, but was overtaken and captured by the Persians. Unfortunately, it cannot be added that Darius showed the clemency of the great Cyrus. The days of Persian generosity to the vanquished had passed, and an era of ferocity had begun. The king ordered the nose, ears, and tongue of Xathrites to be cut off, and for some time kept the miserable prisoner chained to the door of his own palace at Ecbatana, that all might be assured of his downfall. Ultimately he was crucified before the eyes of his recent subjects. The rebellion still continued in Hyrcania and Parthia, where Hystaspes, the king's father, was maintaining a precarious struggle with the malcontents. But, on Darius sending reinforcements, and advancing himself as far as Rhages, the insurgents were so disastrously beaten that they considered it prudent to submit without further delay.

The next scene of hostility was Sagartia, a country situated south of Parthia, at the northern edge of the great rainless desert. One of the native chiefs of this wild region put forth royal pretensions, and assembled an army for the vindication of his claims. The movement, however, was not serious, and Darius easily suppressed it by the aid of a mixed force of Persians and Medes, under a Median commander. The treatment of the vanquished chief was similar to that of Xathrites, for Darius showed no mercy to those who disputed his sovereignty. The Margians, whose country lay within the province of Bactria, now revolted, but were speedily reduced to obedience, without the necessity of any personal interference on the part of the monarch. A worse calamity than any of the preceding, however, was about to ensue. The absence of the king in the north-eastern provinces, where his personal exertions were required for the restoration of his sway, gave occasion for a conspiracy against his rule in Persia itself, where an impostor, following the example of Gomates, asserted that he was the veritable Smerdis. He found many supporters among the people, and was enabled for a time to exercise some species of regal authority. But the army of Darius (though not, it would seem, under the immediate command of the king) quickly marched against him; and, after a violent struggle, in which several battles were fought, the sedition was extinguished, and the impostor executed by the favourite Persian method of crucifixion. While these events were happening in Persia Proper, Babylon again revolted, and once more placed itself under the lead of a pretender who assumed to be Nebuchadnezzar, the son of Nabonidus. The real name of this man was Aracus, and he was an Armenian by descent. A Median general, named Intaphres, was sent against the rebels. Babylon was a second time captured; Aracus was taken prisoner and crucified; and the insurrection was quenched in blood.

The predominance of Darius over his realm was now secured; but a good deal still remained to be done for the vindication of his authority. Taking advantage of the general condition of disturbance, several of the provincial rulers had, without actually raising the flag of rebellion, exhibited a degree of independence which was not consistent with their subordinate position. The conduct of Orœtes, governor of Lydia, Phrygia, and Ionia, was particularly reprehensible. He had long been known for his fierce and turbulent nature, and during the Median revolt had given no assistance to the Persians, whose servant and fellow-countryman he was. At the same time he put to death the governor of one of the neighbouring provinces —a man named Mitrobates—who had reproached him with some of his misdeeds; and he followed

up this crime by slaying the son of the deceased, and annexing to his own dominion the territory which Mitrobates had administered. Subsequently, Darius sent to him a courier with a message, the purport of which he did not like; and on the return of the agent, Orœtes set men to waylay and assassinate him. When Darius had made an end of the chief rebellions against his authority, he determined to call this insolent viceroy to account. He accordingly despatched to Sardis a courtier named Bagæus, who carried with him a number of written orders bearing the king's seal. Arriving at the capital of Lydia, Bagæus cautiously felt his way with the guards who surrounded the person of the viceroy. In the first place, he produced the less important letters, and, finding that entire respect was paid to them, he brought forth one in which were the words, "Persians, King Darius forbids you to be guards to Orœtes." The men at once lowered their lances to Bagæus. Then he delivered to them the last of his missives, which ran,—"King Darius commands the Persians at Sardis to put Orœtes to death." The guards immediately drew their scimitars, and slew the offender in the viceregal palace.*

A similar spirit of insubordination was observed by Darius in the conduct of Aryandes, the governor of Egypt. The Persian sovereign had made a gold coinage of remarkable purity, which Aryandes imitated in silver, without previously obtaining the authorisation of his master. It is believed that he even placed his own name upon the coins; if so, it is not surprising that Darius should have supposed he aimed at complete independence. He was accordingly charged with an intention to rebel, and on that ground was executed. No popular disturbance followed this high-handed act, and Egypt was secured to the Persian. But the troubles of Darius were not yet at an end. A second revolt broke out in Susiana, and was quelled by Gobryas, one of the six nobles who conspired with the son of Hystaspes against Gomates the Magian. The Sacæ of the Tigris next rose in insurrection, and Darius himself took the field against them until they were subdued. The exact dates of these several movements—from the original rebellion of Susiana to the attempt of the Sacæ—it is impossible to fix; but it is believed that all, or nearly all, were comprised within the first five or six years of the reign of Darius Hystaspes.† In that case, they must have ranged from 521 to about 516 B.C.; and the carving of the Behistun Inscription seems to mark the close of that period of commotion through which the Persian monarch had painfully to fight his way.

These repeated troubles directed the attention of Darius to the feeble constitution of the Empire, where every viceroy maintained the state and dignity of a monarch, and could count upon the devotion of numerous armed retainers. Several of the Persian provinces had in former times been themselves the seats of great dominions, and the memory of ancient power and grandeur yet survived. It was therefore natural that the people of these countries should aim at independence, whenever the opportunity might seem to arise; and an ambitious governor would generally encourage their aspirations, in the hope of winning a throne for himself. Yet such a state of things could not be permitted to continue, if the Persian Empire was to endure. The sway of Assyria in her distant possessions was little more than nominal; and Assyria had broken up. Babylonia was equally ill-organised, and the strength of Egypt had always been greatest within her own borders. As a statesman regardful of the future, Darius could not but take example of the past. The weakness of the earlier monarchies had proceeded from want of uniformity in the mode of government, and from the almost complete absence of a strong centralised power. Darius amended these evils by establishing one system for the whole of his immense and varied realm, by imposing fixed and definite taxes (for Imperial purposes) on all the provinces alike, and by an elaborate counterbalancing of one subordinate power by another, so that none should be formidable to the supreme head.

This arrangement, rigid as it was in some respects, left a good deal of local freedom to the several nationalities, which were allowed to retain their languages, religious creeds, laws, and ancient customs, but only in subordination to those more general considerations which were regarded as necessary to the interests of the Empire. Having at length obtained some respite from internal strife, Darius divided his kingdom into many distinct governments, over each of which he placed a satrap. There had, of course, been territorial divisions and viceregal officers before, but of a less defined and less strictly guarded character. The number of satrapies has been variously set down as twenty, twenty-three, twenty-four, and twenty-nine, the last calculation appearing in the inscription on the tomb of Darius, and being, therefore, that which existed at the time of his death. The

* Herodotus, III. 126—8.

† Rawlinson's Five Great Monarchies: Persia, chap. 7.

BAGÆUS DELIVERING HIS MESSAGES TO THE PERSIAN GUARD.

satrap was the supreme civil governor, and was charged with the collection of the Imperial taxes, the administration of justice, and the maintenance of order. It is immediately from the Greek that we derive the word satrap, but it comes more remotely from a Persian root. The meaning is believed to be, "upholder of the king," or "kingdom;" and such was the exact position of these regal lieutenants. They were nominated by the king at his pleasure, and recalled or put to death at will; and they were chosen from any class of his subjects whom the monarch deigned to honour. In the greater number of instances, the satraps were doubtless Persians or Medes; but members of the subject nationalities were occasionally selected. Representing the king himself, they were surrounded by a good deal of pomp, ceremony, and splendour; they had the power of life and death; and they could appoint deputies over cities and districts. When the writer of the Book of Esther speaks of Persia being divided into a hundred and twenty-seven provinces,* it is probably to these minor districts that he alludes.

The conduct of the satraps was often extremely arbitrary. Besides the revenue collected by them for the Imperial exchequer, they wrung from the unhappy people large sums of money for the support of their own magnificence, and in many instances justice itself was sold to whomsoever had the amplest means. Fathers of families were frequently compelled to give up their daughters as inmates of the seraglios maintained by these minor princes; for, although the power of the satraps was strictly limited as regards the monarch, it had but shadowy boundaries with respect to the subject. Under the system created by Darius, however, the provincial governors were invested with civil powers only. The command of the local army, which until then had been in their hands, was now confided to officers who were independent of any other control than that of the king himself. At a later period, some exceptions were made to this rule; but Darius appears to have been distinctly opposed to the union of two powers, each of which was considerable in itself, and both of which, combined, might be dangerous to the supremacy of the throne. In times of peace, military service was not required of the conquered nationalities. The cities were garrisoned by Persians and Medes, perhaps also by Hyrcanians; and very strong forces were at all times stationed at cities like Memphis, Babylon, and Sardis, which had once been themselves the capitals of great kingdoms, and were therefore the more likely to make attempts at independence. It will thus be seen that the usual military system of the country was a system of subjection to the dominant race; but whenever a great war occurred, a levy of the entire population of the Empire was called for.

Sometimes the Persian king would permit the continuance of a native dynasty in one of his conquered provinces. This did not prevent the appointment of a satrap also; but in that case the latter official had to share his authority with the prince. In some instances, a considerable amount of independence was granted to particular tribes, which, being thus left to themselves, would carry on petty wars with one another. As in many great empires, both of the ancient and modern world, the mountainous districts were infested with robbers, who defied all external authority, and some of whom are reported to have levied tribute on the Persian kings themselves. The satrapies of Asia Minor were practically distinct monarchies, exercising the sovereign rights of peace and war, sending and receiving embassies, concluding alliances, and sometimes attacking one another, as policy seemed to dictate. But these provinces were remote from the Persian capital, and the readiness with which bodies of Greek mercenaries could be enlisted amongst a population which was partly Hellenic, and which under all circumstances was prone to intrigue and change, greatly facilitated any local ambition that might from time to time be formed. Nevertheless, the political arrangements of Darius I. effected, throughout by far the greater part of his dominions, a compactness and concentration of power, which for some generations added to the glory of the Persian Empire.

The satrap, as we have said, was distinct from the military commandant, and in some instances the chief officer of the garrison was independent of both. But there was a still further check upon the possible insubordination of the provincial governor. He was placed under the watchful eye of a royal secretary, whose duty would seem to have been that of making direct reports to the king upon everything of importance that happened within his jurisdiction, and in particular upon the conduct of the regent. These officials were called the King's Eyes or Ears, and their privileges were such that they possessed the right of entrance everywhere. The system was in fact one of general distrust: the satrap, the commandant, and the secretary, acted as checks, and often as spies, upon one another. Even these precautions, however, were not held to be sufficient. At intervals,

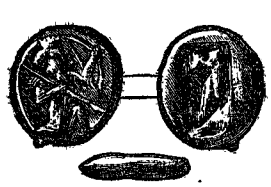
* Esther, i. 1.

either regular or irregular, an officer from the court was sent on a visit of inspection into each province; and, as these officers were accompanied by armed forces, they were enabled to redress anything which they might consider wrong in the local administration. The satraps and commandants were frequently chosen from among the king's own relations, or received princesses of the blood-royal for their wives. This was thought to give them an interest in the maintenance of the Imperial power with which they were so closely allied; and for the most part the calculation seems not to have been erroneous. The laws of Darius worked fairly well, if regard be had simply to the unity of the kingdom; yet the division of authority, and the elaborate machinery of counterpoises, had its disadvantages in times of sudden danger, when the union of many powers in one person is necessary to effective action.

Each satrapy was bound to furnish to the crown a certain amount of tribute, in money and in kind. Persis, or Persia Proper, was not regarded as a satrapy, and therefore paid no tribute, though all its inhabitants were obliged, when the king passed through their country, to make him presents according to their means. The payments in kind required of many of the satrapies were heavy; the payments in money—which appear, in particular instances, to have been obtained through the medium of a land-tax—were probably not serious, in proportion to the whole number of people in the kingdom. Some very onerous dues, however, were enforced by the State, and must often have entailed much hardship. The king owned the fisheries, and made them a source of profit; and he had so great an interest in the rivers that, when water was required for irrigation, the amount was regulated by an officer who superintended the opening of the sluices, and who of course received an equivalent in money. The royal monopolies were farmed by persons who gave a fixed sum for the privilege, and got what they could out of the people—a system doubtless productive of the same oppression and misery that we see in Turkey, from the same cause, at the present day. In addition to all these Imperial imposts were the provincial exactions for the maintenance of the satrapies. The viceroys were apparently left to pay themselves from the resources of the country which they governed. Their demands were not merely large, but irregular and capricious; and to this extent the endeavours of Darius to establish uniformity were suffered to be very seriously thwarted.

Other matters of administration received the attention of this remarkable sovereign. Pursuing the same idea of strongly centralised authority which had prompted his first reforms, he determined so to improve the intercommunication between various parts of his kingdom as to bring the influence of the capital more readily to bear on even the remoter provinces. It has been said that Darius established in Persia a system of roads, or at least one great road between Susa and Sardis. This may be doubtful; but at any rate he availed himself of the routes already existing to erect on them a succession of post-houses, with an array of men and horses duly organized for the conveyance of official despatches to and from the capital. The interval between each of these stations and the next was determined by the distance a good horse could accomplish in one journey when galloping his hardest. The written commands of the king, and the reports of his officers, were thus carried with extraordinary quickness from post to post; for the messengers travelled both by day and by night, and were relieved at every station, so as to ensure the highest efficiency. Caravanserais, or inns for the entertainment of travellers, were attached to the several post-houses; bodies of military were concentrated at different points along the route, for the repression of brigandage; and the rivers were crossed by bridges or ferries.

Darius is sometimes credited with being the first Persian king who struck money. However this may have been, it is certain that one of the chief Persian coins was called a daric—a term which has been derived from the name of Darius, though the fact is not beyond dispute. The gold coinage of this reign was highly valued in later times for



COIN OF DARIUS.

its unusual purity. Some of the gold darics still remain, and their average value seems to have been about twenty-two shillings of our money. The shape and fashion of the daric were rude and barbarous: the coin was exceedingly thick in substance, uncertain in shape, and altogether clumsily wrought. On one side was the figure of an archer bending his bow (perhaps intended for the king himself); on the other, an irregular depression. The silver darics presented a similar appearance, but were of smaller size, and worth

not much more than an English shilling. As far as can now be ascertained, these gold and silver darics were the only coins used in Persia, and it is on record that they were produced in enormous numbers, and often sent into other lands by way of bribes. The gold darics were the coins best known in Athens; but, upon the conquest of Persia by Alexander the Great, most of them were melted down, and recoined with the head of that monarch. By some authorities it has been doubted whether the silver pieces are properly described as darics. They appear to have originated, as already set forth, with Aryandes, the governor of Egypt, who made them in emulation of his sovereign's gold coinage. But it is certain that these silver coins were afterwards perpetuated by Darius I. and other monarchs; and it therefore seems not unfitting to describe them by the name they generally bear.

The government of Darius, as of other Persian kings, was despotic. The nobles may occasionally have been summoned to aid the sovereign with their counsel; but the latter was not strictly bound to accept the advice when given. Justice was administered by judges appointed by the king, and it can hardly be doubted that their decisions in important cases were shaped in conformity with what the monarch was known to desire. It is true that both the Medes and the Persians had a precise body of laws, which were noted for their unchangeable character. Yet the judges themselves, as we have seen, declared on a famous occasion that one of those laws permitted the king to do in all things exactly as he liked. After the time of Cambyses, the Persian monarchs lived in great luxury, and everything about the court was regulated with an extreme regard to ceremony and etiquette. The river Choaspes, near Susa, was believed to supply the only water fit for the king to drink, and it was therefore carried about with him wherever he went. His table was furnished with salt from the neighbourhood of the temple erected to Jupiter Ammon in the heart of the African desert; with wine from Chalybon in Syria; and with bread made from the wheat of Æolia. In later ages, the king spent his life in the indolence of the seraglio attached to the palaces of Susa, Babylon, and Ecbatana; but Darius was a man of energy and active will, to whom effeminate indulgence was repulsive. He was likewise a great builder, and to him are ascribed the royal palace at Susa, and the design, if not the execution, of the Chehl Minar, or Hall of Forty Columns, forming one of the grandest structures on the Persepolitan platform. The platform itself was also his work, and it was he who in the first instance ornamented the flights of steps by which the palaces were approached with figures in bas-relief. The rock-tomb at Nakhsh-i-Rustam, in which the remains of Darius were ultimately deposited, was constructed during his life-time; and the interesting inscription on the face of the mountain at Behistun was due to his regard for the perpetuation of historic knowledge. Darius, therefore, was not merely distinguished as a warrior; he understood the art of government, and has left splendid and enduring monuments of his taste and grandeur.

Although the military spirit was more highly developed in Cyrus and Cambyses than in Darius, the latter was not entirely neglectful of foreign expeditions. About the year 517 B.C. the island of Samos was reduced by his forces, and afterwards treated with so much barbarity that, according to Herodotus, it was left entirely destitute of inhabitants. When the Persians took possession of an island which they desired to re-people with their own race, they drew a line of troops across the territory from shore to shore, and then, marching towards the sea, swept everything before them. The operations against Samos, however, were of a trifling nature, excepting to the unfortunate inhabitants who were so ruthlessly exterminated. The ambition of Darius prompted him to much greater exploits, and, observing the richness and fertility of the lands beyond his eastern boundaries, he determined to invade that part of India which has since been known as the Punjab. The date of his attack upon this country was apparently between the years 515 and 508 B.C. In the earliest of the inscriptions of Darius—the writing at Behistun—India is not mentioned among the provinces ruled by that sovereign. But the name appears in the inscription of Persepolis; and in the writing at Nakhsh-i-Rustam it is again set down, together with several other new provinces, including Scythia, which, however, was never really annexed by Darius. We have already explained that the Behistun Inscription could not have been executed later than 515 B.C., and the Scythian expedition is believed to have been in 508. The attack on India can therefore be approximately fixed, though not with any greater exactness. It was preceded by an exploration of the Indus from Attock to the sea, by means of boats. The exploration was under the conduct of a man named Scylax, a native of Caria, who is reported to have written an account of his voyage in Greek. The campaign against the Indians was rapidly and successfully

conducted, and a province of considerable magnitude and importance was thus added to the Empire. One result of the conquest was the creation of a large coasting trade between the mouths of the Indus and the Persian Gulf. This was a source of wealth to the Persians themselves, while, in a more direct way, the acquisition of the country about the Indus added largely to the revenues of the State. "The population of India," says Herodotus, "is by far the greatest of all the nations we know, and the Indians paid a tribute proportionably larger than the rest—namely, three hundred and sixty talents of gold-dust."

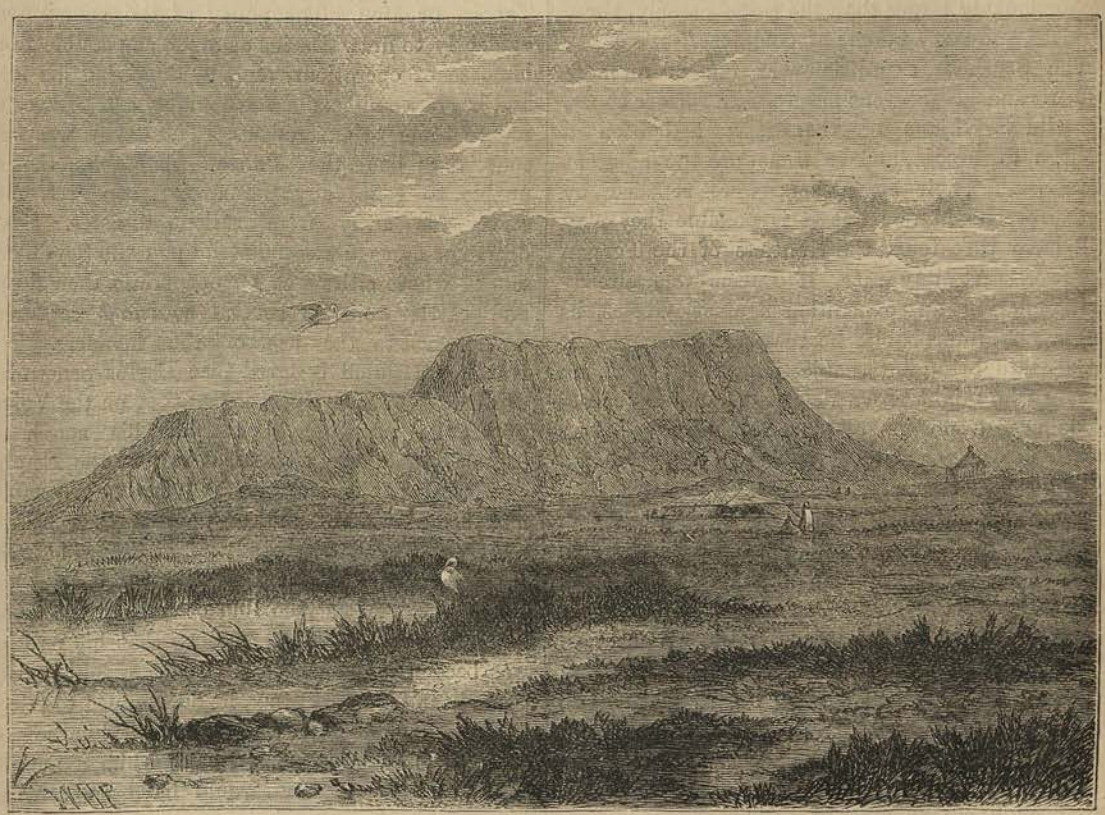
The Scythian expedition was one of a more difficult and adventurous nature. In former times, the wild Scythians of the desert had been a scourge to Media, and to some of the adjacent countries. Their aggressions were repelled by Cyaxares the Mede; but it is possible they may still have threatened the frontiers of the Persian Empire. At any rate, if Darius was already contemplating an expedition against Greece, as seems not improbable, he may have thought it prudent to bring into subjection, first of all, an enemy who might prove dangerous in the absence of so large a portion of his army. Nevertheless, it was a perilous feat to enter upon a wild and little-known territory, inhabited by a warlike, hardy, and wandering race of savages, whom experience had shown that it was almost impossible to subdue. The Scythian expedition of Darius reflects but little credit on his judgment, even supposing it to have been justifiable as a measure of retaliation, of which, indeed, we can affirm nothing that is not purely conjectural. The project being settled, however, Darius ordered Ariaramnes, satrap of Cappadocia, to cross the Euxine with a small fleet, conveying about two thousand men; to make a sudden descent upon the coast, and to bring away with him a number of prisoners. The result was the acquisition of sufficient facts about the general character of the country to determine the nature and proportions of the attack. A fleet of six hundred ships was then collected, chiefly from among the Asiatic Greeks, and this was accompanied by an army, amounting probably to about 800,000 men.

The expedition was conducted by Darius himself, and was pursued with great resolution and intrepidity. The route followed by the invaders has given rise to much discussion among scholars, but without any conclusive results, owing to the difficulty, in some instances, of identifying ancient names with modern places. According to Herodotus, the Persians crossed the Thracian Bosphorus by a bridge of boats constructed by Mandrocles, a Samian, who exhibited so much skill in the work that the king conferred on him a large reward. Darius then marched through Thrace towards the line of the northern mountains, and, having passed the Hæmus, or Balkans, received the submission of the Getæ. Still penetrating northward, he crossed the Danube (otherwise called the Ister) by another bridge of boats, built by the Ionian Greeks, and then, it is said, followed a body of Scythians in a north-easterly direction as far as the river Tanais, or Don. The policy of the enemy was evidently to draw Darius as much as possible from his base of operations, and, by depriving his men and baggage-animals of food, water, and forage, to reduce them to extremities. The design was well conceived; but the Persian monarch, though unable to effect any permanent conquest, preserved his army from serious disaster. Some degree of damage was inflicted upon the Scythians, one of whose cities was burned, while their flocks and cattle were on several occasions captured, and turned to the use of the invaders. The traveller Rennell believed that Darius penetrated as far as the modern city of Saratow, on the Volga. If so, he must have extended his march no inconsiderable way into what is now the Empire of Russia; but the fact is very questionable, and some writers are of opinion that he did not get beyond the sandy tract lying between the Danube and the Dniester, in the present Bessarabia. Along the line of one of the rivers he began some forts, but, finding that his position was becoming dangerous, and that supplies might possibly fail his vast army, he determined to retire. His movements were veiled by the kindling of large fires, and, having left behind him a number of invalid troops who would have embarrassed his march, he turned once more towards the Danube.

The bridge of boats over that river was still guarded by the Ionian Greeks who made it. The Scythians had in the meanwhile endeavoured to persuade these men to destroy the communication, and so prevent the escape of the Persians; but they refused to break faith with their suzerain, and Darius recrossed the stream in safety. How many of his army he had lost in this expedition (which extended over rather more than two months, dating from the passage of the Danube) is uncertain; but it is probable that the number of his men was considerably reduced when he again found himself in Thrace. In returning through that country, Darius met with no opposition; but, being desirous of getting back to his own kingdom,

he almost immediately passed the Bosphorus into Asia. Thrace, however, was not entirely reduced, and Darius left the work of conquest to be completed by one of his generals, named Megabazus, to whom he gave the command of 80,000 men. That officer acted with so much vigour that in one campaign he subjugated all the countries between the Propontis, or Sea of Marmora, and the Strymon, so that the Persian frontier in that direction was extended to the borders of Macedonia. Even Macedonia itself was glad to confess the supremacy of Darius, and to occupy the position of a vassal power. About the year 505 B.C. the cities of Byzantium, Chalcedon, Antandros, and Lamponium, with the neighbouring islands of Lemnos and Imbros, were taken by another of the Persian commanders; and from this date Darius must be considered not merely as an Asiatic, but also as a European, sovereign.

The death of Darius took place in 485 B.C., after a reign of thirty-six years, by which time he had attained the age of sixty-three. The later incidents of his rule were characterised by ill-fortune. The revolt of the Ionian Greeks, the reverses experienced by the Persian generals in Hellas, and the insurrection of the Egyptians, were all events warning Darius that his power, vast though it was, had its limits. The Egyptian movement has been mentioned in an earlier Chapter; the collision of Persia with the vigorous Greek nationality is so much more intimately associated with the latter than with the former as to be fitly relegated to a future page. The successor to Darius I. was Xerxes, his son by Atossa, the daughter of Cyrus; but we must defer our narrative of the great actions connected with this reign to its due place in the course of Grecian history. Xerxes himself was a very uninteresting person—the type of an Asiatic despot, passing much of his life in the enervating atmosphere of the seraglio, and venting his furious passions with the irrationality of a madman. His ill-success in war, his tyranny, and his voluptuous indolence, gave occasion to a conspiracy against him; and his uncle Artabanus, the captain of the guards, aided by a eunuch who held the office of chamberlain, murdered him in his bed, in the twenty-first year of his reign, about



SITE OF SUSA.

465 B.C. Xerxes had only one wife; but his intrigues with the princesses of the court were so frequent that his spouse, Amestris, put to death several who had provoked her wrath. This led to disaffection on the part of their relatives, and to the execution of many, in the hope of striking terror into the rest. The conspiracy by which the king lost his life may probably be traced to this series of events. There was little in the character of Xerxes to command respect; yet Herodotus has told certain anecdotes which show that he had sufficient magnanimity to listen without displeasure to those who advised him against his wishes. Some of the most magnificent buildings at Persepolis are attributed to him, and his style of living was doubtless characterised by the utmost splendour of an Oriental monarch.

THE MOTHER OF CYRUS SAVING HIS LIFE.

The assassination of Xerxes appears to have been followed by a brief usurpation on the part of Artabanus. Of the three sons of Xerxes, the eldest and the youngest—Darius and Artaxerxes—were alone living at court when the tragical event took place; for Hystaspes, the second son, was away in Bactria, of which province he was the satrap. Artabanus may have seen that he could not permanently establish his own rule, and may therefore have determined on transferring his power to one of the late king's sons, provided he could remove the other without incurring additional responsibility. He accordingly persuaded Artaxerxes that the murder of his father was the act of the eldest son, and Darius was put to death by his younger brother, who ascended the throne in 464 B.C. This is the monarch who is known in history as Artaxerxes Longimanus, from the extraordinary length of his arms and hands, which, according to Strabo, reached his knees when he stood upright. Plutarch, however, says that the addition to his name was derived from the fact of his right hand being longer than his left. Artaxerxes, as the creature of Artabanus, was continually at the mercy of that assassin, who conceived a design against his life, and on one occasion actually wounded him with a drawn sword. But the attempt was too audacious, and its failure proved the ruin of Artabanus. The eyes of the king were opened to the crimes this man had already committed, and he was executed, together with the eunuch who had assisted him. Such, at least, appears the most probable course of events; but there is a doubt as to whether Artabanus ever occupied the position of an independent sovereign. Still, even supposing his usurpation to be an error of some ancient historian, it is at any rate

certain that for several months he exercised so entire a control over Artaxerxes I. that the conduct of affairs was practically in his hands.

The troubles of Artaxerxes were not ended by the death of the traitor. The sons of Artabanus rose in rebellion, but were defeated in a battle in which they lost their lives. This was followed by a revolt headed by Hystaspes, the second son of Xerxes, who, at the head of a large army of Bactrians, laid claim to the throne. The movement was so threatening that Artaxerxes marched in person against his brother, whom, after an indecisive engagement, he utterly defeated in a second battle. What became of Hystaspes is unknown; but Bactria at once submitted, without attempting to continue the struggle. These events were almost immediately followed by another insurrection in Egypt, which, after recovering its independence under Darius I., had been reconquered by Xerxes. The story of this formidable revolt has been related in the Tenth Chapter of the present History, and it is here sufficient to record that Egypt was once more reduced to submission by the forces of Artaxerxes. The recovery of the African province is referred to about 455 B.C., and, some years later, trouble was again rife in Greece. Peace was re-established in 449 B.C., but a rebellion subsequently broke out in Syria. Megabyzus, the satrap of that country, was the commander by whom the rebellion of the Egyptians under Inarus had been defeated. He had promised the unfortunate leader that his life should be spared; but Inarus was crucified by order of Artaxerxes. If would seem that Megabyzus resented this act, not only as a piece of inhumanity, but as a slight to himself; and he now roused so formidable a sedition in Syria that several of the armies sent against him were discomfited. Ultimately, he entered into terms with the king, and renewed his allegiance upon obtaining the conditions he demanded. Artaxerxes was a man of weak character and contemptible life. He suffered himself to be swayed in all things by his mother Amestris, and his sister Amytis, whose characters were not such as to render their influence favourable. Though graced by a certain amiability, he was wanting in the vigour and resolution that are necessary in a despotic monarch. The consequences are seen in the increase of court disorders, and in the unbridled tyranny of the king's mother. Artaxerxes died in 425 B.C., and was succeeded by his son Xerxes II., who reigned only forty-five days, when he was murdered at a festival by his half-brother, Sogdianus.

The fate of the usurper was similar to that which he had himself brought upon his predecessor. After a reign of about seven months, he was put to death by his brother Ochus, who, on ascending the throne, took the name of Darius II., called Nothus by the Greeks, on account of his illegitimacy. The reign of this monarch, which extended from 424 to 405 B.C., was distinguished by frequent revolts at home, and by intrigues with Greece, having for their object the strengthening of Sparta against Athens, and the recovery of the Hellenic cities in Asia Minor. The Greeks were largely corrupted by Persian gold, and the policy of playing off Sparta and Athens against one another was attended by considerable success. The dominion of Persia was re-established over the Asiatic Greeks; but in another direction the extent of the Empire was seriously curtailed. Egypt threw off the Persian yoke in 414 B.C. The Medes likewise made an attempt to recover their independence; but the rebellion was suppressed. A horrible series of events occurred towards the latter end of the reign of Darius Nothus. A noble named Terituchmes, who occupied the position of satrap in one of the provinces, received in marriage the king's daughter, Amestris. Subsequently, however, he fell in love with his half-sister, Roxana, and formed a plan by which he might get rid of his wife, and establish his independence of the throne. The conspirators were three hundred in number, and it was agreed that Amestris should be put into a sack, and that each of the conspirators should in turn thrust his sword into her body, so that all might be equally involved in the crime, and each be pledged to the support of the others. Darius, hearing that such an act was contemplated, sent a force of men, under the command of one Udiastes, to prevent it, if possible. Terituchmes was accordingly attacked and slain, after a resistance in which he is said to have killed thirty-seven of his assailants with his own hand. Whether Amestris was saved or not, is unknown; but it is recorded that the mother, brothers, and sisters of Terituchmes were apprehended, that Roxana was hewn in pieces, and that the other offenders were buried alive. The wife of Arsaces, the heir-apparent, who afterwards ascended the throne as Artaxerxes Mnemon, was the sister of Terituchmes, and for this reason alone fell under suspicion, though apparently without any just cause. Being sentenced to death, she would in all probability have been executed, had not her husband obtained her life by repeated entreaties. The son of Terituchmes took possess of the satrapy, but was ultimately poisoned by order of Parysatis, the wife of Darius Nothus, who has been

variously described as the sister and the aunt of her husband.

Darius Nothus died in 405 B.C. It is related that, when on his death-bed, his son Artaxerxes asked him what had guided his conduct in the management of the Empire, and that he replied, "The dictates of justice and of religion." His actions, however, do not at all correspond with this self-imputed righteousness. He obtained the throne by the murder of his brother, and he acted throughout his reign with a merciless ferocity which may sometimes have been forced upon him by Parysatis, but which was often the result of fear combined with natural cruelty. His rule was weak and hesitating; his satraps asserted a degree of power which was almost equivalent to independence; and this tendency was fostered by allowing the sons of provincial governors to succeed by a species of hereditary right. In some instances, two or three satrapies were combined under one ruler, and the functions of the military commandant were united to those of the civil administrator. The eunuchs of the palace were allowed to usurp immense and dangerous powers: one of them, named Artaxares, aspired to the sovereignty. The decay of the Persian Empire had made immense strides since the accession of the first Xerxes, and the completion of its ruin was not far off.

The evils of a disputed succession appeared likely even before the death of Darius Nothus. The eldest son was Arsaces, and to him therefore the crown was due, according to usual custom. But Parysatis preferred her second son, Cyrus, and endeavoured to influence the mind of her husband to make a decree in his favour. Darius, however, had a greater affection for Arsaces; indeed, Cyrus had offended him by executing two of his cousins, because they had not observed in his presence the forms due to royalty. On Arsaces being nominated to the succession, he assumed the name of Artaxerxes II., and is usually described as Artaxerxes Mnemon, on account of his memory. The inauguration of the new monarch took place in a temple at Pasargadæ, which, as the old capital of Persia, and the head-quarters of the ancient faith, was still regarded with peculiar veneration. Shortly after entering the fane, Artaxerxes was warned that his life was in danger. Cyrus, it was said, lay hidden in the temple, and intended to assassinate his brother as he was investing himself in some robe that was necessary to the ceremonial. The charge was confirmed by one of the officiating priests, and Cyrus would have been slain in the temple, had not his mother so entwined him in her arms as to incapacitate the executioner from striking the one without killing the other. Artaxerxes was even persuaded to spare his brother's life, and to send him back to his government. Parysatis assured him that the charges against Cyrus were false; but that the prince was really a traitor became abundantly manifest in his subsequent actions. He raised a rebellion against the throne, the details of which belong properly to the history of Greece, and must therefore be postponed until we come to the annals of that country. Cyrus was defeated and killed in 401 B.C., at the battle of Cunaxa, in the plains of Babylon; and Artaxerxes, being ambitious of the credit of having despatched his brother with his own hand, put to death two men who claimed the honour for themselves.

Delivered from a dangerous rivalry, Artaxerxes did his utmost to weaken the power of the Greeks, and the wars that ensued were in some respects favourable to the Persian monarch, who recovered the Ionian cities, and Cyprus, in 387 B.C. On the other hand, a personal expedition into the country of the Cadusians, dwelling in the wild and misty tract between the Elburz mountains and the Caspian, was attended by great disasters, owing to the capture of supplies by the enemy, and might have terminated in the complete destruction of the invading force, had not the king's general, Tiribazus, persuaded each of the two Cadusian monarchs, who occupied separate camps, that the other was secretly negotiating with Artaxerxes; whereupon, both sent embassies. Several of the provinces revolted in the later years of this reign, and the aged king found himself involved in troubles as his end drew near. His eldest son, Darius, who had been named as his successor, conspired against him, and was slain; and at his own decease, which took place in 359 B.C., the throne was occupied by Artaxerxes Ochus, who had induced his elder brother, Ariaspes, to commit suicide, under the false impression that he had offended his father, and would be put to a cruel and disgraceful death. Arsames, the half-brother of Ochus, was then assassinated by order of that prince, and Artaxerxes Mnemon is said to have died of grief on learning the fact. He had previously lost his wife, Statira, to whom he was tenderly attached, and who had been poisoned by Parysatis, the Queen-Mother. The history of Persia at this period is stained by the most frightful crimes. Murder, treachery, and dissolute intrigues, were the chief characteristics of the royal court at Susa, and any one who rose a little above the dead level of iniquity was soon

cut off, or placed under circumstances which rendered life a misery and a shame. The second Artaxerxes was certainly superior both to his mother and his children; but his moral weakness was such that he yielded himself to the influences by which he was surrounded, and thus shared the guilt which his better qualities must have made him deplore.

Ochus, having obtained possession of the throne in 359 B.C., used his power in the same sanguinary spirit by which he had acquired it. That he might not be threatened by a rival, he destroyed all the princes of the blood-royal on whom he could lay his hands, and even, it is believed, some of the princesses. The number of persons whom he thus removed by death is said to have been eighty, and the general character of his rule was that of the most ruthless tyranny. His policy, however, was vigorous, and in many instances successful. Revolts broke out in Asia Minor, Phœnicia, and other provinces; but, after a period of reverse, Ochus succeeded in re-establishing his power. In 351 B.C. Phœnicia was reduced by Ochus in person, who destroyed the magnificent city of Sidon, or rather brought its inhabitants to so desperate a condition that they themselves set fire to their houses, producing a general conflagration, in which 40,000 persons lost their lives. Ochus had already made an unsuccessful invasion of Egypt, and he now once more attacked that country at the head of 330,000 Asiatics, assisted by 14,000 Greeks. Twenty thousand Greeks were ranged on the side of Nectanebo II., the Egyptian sovereign, for the Hellenes had in this respect very much the character of the modern Swiss, and fought for any State which paid them. But the forces of Nectanebo were far inferior to those of Ochus, and the Persians rapidly made their way from one city to another, until the Egyptian monarch took to flight, about 353 B.C. The country of the Nile was once more included in the Persian Empire, and the authority of Artaxerxes Ochus was so firmly established over all his dominions that the glory of his reign was equal to that of Darius Hystaspes. The most successful of his captains were Mentor the Rhodian, and Bagoas, the chief of the eunuchs. Both these officers were rewarded by posts of great importance, Mentor being appointed to the government of the Asiatic sea-board, and Bagoas, remaining at the capital as head of the internal administration. The Persian Sovereignty was once more predominant and self-assertive. It was again without a rival of equal power, and other nations may well have thought that a long career of prosperity lay before it. But conspiracy was secretly undermining the foundations of the royal throne, and Ochus had so disgusted his subjects by the severity of his rule that they were not indisposed to any change which might hold out even the possibility of an improvement. Bagoas was probably aware of this feeling, and may also have had some reason for dreading that so capricious a monarch would one day turn against himself. He accordingly poisoned the king in 338 B.C., and conferred the throne on his youngest son, Arses, then a mere youth, whose position he shielded, according to the evil customs of those times, by assassinating all his brothers. Manifestly, he did not intend this prince to enjoy more than the shadow of kingship, the reality of which was to be exercised by himself; but when, growing older, Arses evinced a disposition to act independently of his protector, Bagoas caused him to be assassinated in 336 B.C., together with his infant children. For the next occupant of the throne, he selected a person named Codomannus. The origin of this man is involved in doubt. Some say he was descended from Darius Nothus; others report that he had originally been nothing better than a courier, and was not related to the royal house at all. Whatever his family, however, he was a man of noble presence, and of some excellent qualities. He refused to be the tool of Bagoas, who thereupon attempted to poison him. The new king, who on ascending the throne assumed the title of Darius III., discovered the treachery of which it was sought to make him the victim, and compelled the eunuch to drink the poison he had himself prepared. Darius Codomannus was the last of the ancient kings of Persia. The story of his reign makes a portion of that wonderful narrative of which the principal figure is Alexander the Great, and these concluding scenes must be consigned to their proper place in the annals of the Macedonian kingdom.

Persia was in some respects the greatest of the five Asiatic Empires which stand out so prominently in the records of the ancient world, and of which the earlier dominions were those of Chaldæa, Assyria, Babylonia, and Media. The political idea represented in all these organisations was that of naked force, the highest manifestation of which was to be seen in the king, from whom it descended to his subordinate officers. It was the crudest idea of government conceivable; denying all participation of power, dispensing with every species of check, erecting the monarch into a god, and depressing the people into the condition of slaves. In the five early monarchies of Asia, even

the priests seem to have possessed but little influence over the conduct of affairs. The kings may have been religious, and have scrupulously observed all the ceremonials of the faith. Doubtless the palace and the temple were glad of each other's support against the dull mass of popular suffering and discontent. But the hierarchy had no such power as they exercised in Egypt, or as that which in many modern countries has made the temporal sovereign little better than the vassal of the Church. The usurpation of Gomates the Magian, in Persia, had apparently for its object to establish a sacerdotal government, which would have kept the secular arm in subjection. But the attempt was brought to a violent close by Darius Hystaspes, and it was never renewed. In these ancient monarchies, the king represented all the forces of the State, and the country was prosperous or the reverse, according as the king was energetic or indolent. The system of government was mere despotism, and it had both the strength and the weakness of undivided rule. Freedom was a thing unknown, not simply in practice, but also, it would seem, in theory. That political science which has for its avowed end and object the promotion of the general good, and which consults the people instead of oppressing them, could not be developed in so uncongenial a soil. Side by side with Persian glory and with Persian decay, it grew up amongst those vigorous communities of Hellenic race and speech which, both in politics and in matters of pure intellect, were the true parents of the modern world. The splendour of Asiatic autocracies now fades behind us, and we enter on the field of Europe, and the activity of ordered commonwealths.

CHAPTER XXII.

PRE-HISTORIC GREECE.

Situation and General Character of Greece—Early Inhabitants: the Pelasgians—Architectural Remains of the Pelasgian Times—Other Tribes: the Caucones, Leleges, and Thracians—Arrival of Cecrops from Egypt—Phœnician Colony under Cadmus—Story of Danaus—Erechtheus, Lelex, and Pelops—Probabilities of Oriental Colonisation—Subjugation of the Pelasgians by the Hellenes—Migration of the Hellenic Tribes: the Æolians, Achæans, Ionians, and Dorians—Early Traditions—Distinctions of the Several Tribes—The Deluges of Ogyges and Deucalion—Supposed Origin of the Greek Religion—Homer, Hesiod, Orpheus, and the First Musæus, as Religious Teachers—Leading Characteristics of the Greek Religious System.

When, in some very remote age, certain of the wandering tribes of Asia found their way into that part of the globe which we now call Europe, those who settled in the south-eastern corner saw before them a territory excellently adapted for the colonies of a young and vigorous race. Between Asia Minor and the opposite coast, the sunny waters of the Ægean were powdered with a number of islets, the warm volcanic soil of which nourished the most splendid vegetation under a climate of rare and exquisite beauty. The mainland, washed by the foam on every side but one, presented a varied scene of mountains and valleys, woods and plains; seas running up into deep bays and gulfs; islands giving richness and beauty to every curving sweep of the blue waves; peninsulas and promontories jutting out into the luminous air, with infinite promise in their winding shores and deep-withdrawing dales. This was Greece—a land destined to be the home of arts, of arms, of politics, of philosophy, and of literature, to which all succeeding generations should turn as to the greatest example of awakened intellect and active power.

The southern, western, and eastern boundaries of ancient Greece are sufficiently indicated by the Mediterranean, Ionian, and Ægean seas. To the north lay Illyria and Macedonia—countries in which there may have been some admixture of Greek blood, but whose populations were regarded by the genuine Hellenes as barbarians. The physical boundary in this direction is a chain of mountains stretching from the Acroceraunian Promontory (the Cape of Thunderbolts, as the Greek name signifies), on the north-western side of the peninsula, to Mount Olympus, in the north-eastern corner of Thessaly. The famous vale of Tempe, lying between Mount Olympus on the north and Mount Ossa on the south—a valley traversed by the river Peneus, and in some places narrowing down to a mere mountain pass—leads by a winding route into the great Thessalian plain and the true realm of Greece. Admirably protected towards the north by ranges of steep mountains, Thessaly, and

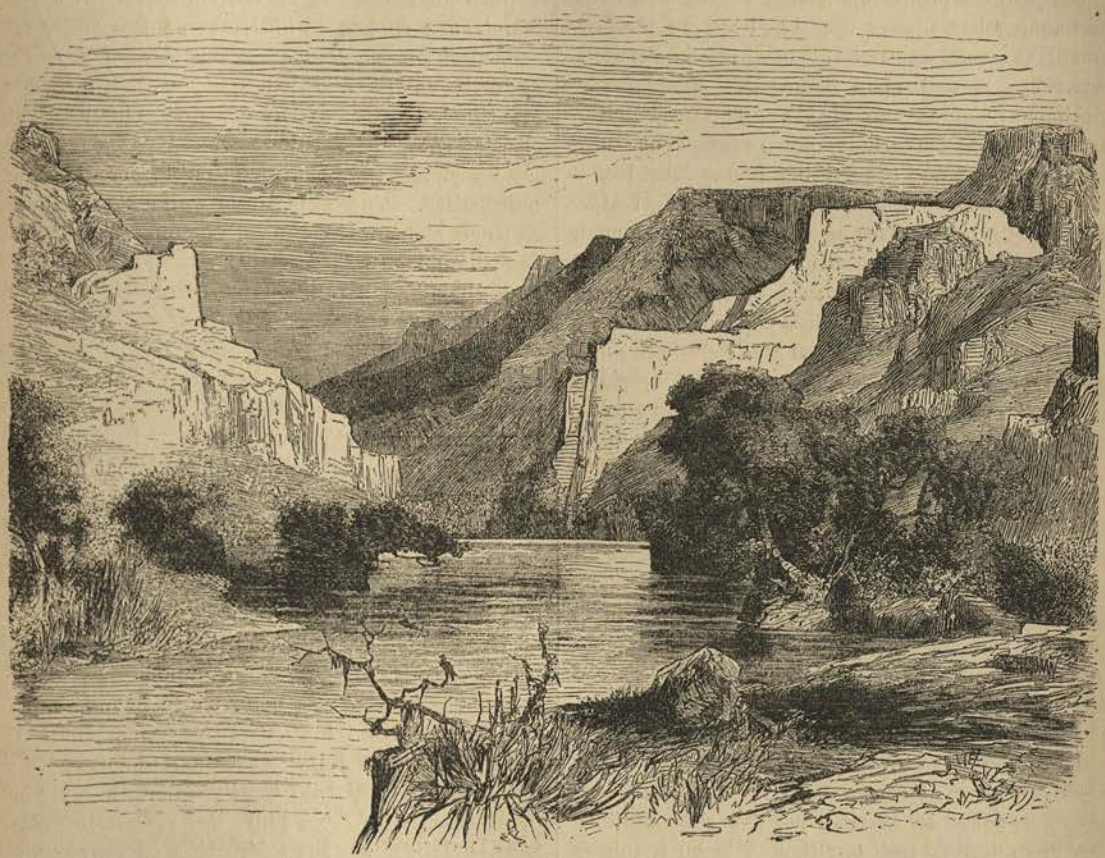
therefore the more southern regions also, can alone be entered with ease through this pass, in which the rocks rise so steeply from the bed of the river that the road, which at one part is cut out of the cliff, is capable of being barred by ten men against an army, or might, at any rate, have been so held in days when the operations of war were simpler than they are now, and when more depended upon individual efforts. Classical writers speak of the enchanting nature of this glen, the length of which is barely five miles. They celebrate its perpetual verdure, its shady groves, its flowery meadows, its sparkling streams, and the melody of its choir of birds; so that the name of Tempe has become a synonym for any valley of peculiar loveliness. Modern travellers, however, describe the pass as remarkable rather for savage grandeur than for seductive beauty. Nevertheless, its ancient reputation, whether true at any time or not, is secure in the immortality of books.

The southern parts of Greece, as well as the northern, are crossed by numerous mountain chains, at once adding to the magnificence of the scenery, and defending the country against invasion. The whole conformation of the land is singularly broken, and the evidence of geology shows that the islands adjacent to the coast (of which Eubœa is the largest and most important) were originally one with the continent. On the south-east, next to Bœotia, the peninsula of Attica, celebrated for its being the seat of Athens, stretches out towards the Mediterranean; on the south-west lies the nearly insulated territory of Peloponnesus (now called the Morea), containing Achaia, Sicyon, Elis, Arcadia, Argolis (in itself a peninsula, divided from that of Attica by the Saronic Gulf), Triphylia, Messenia, and Laconia. The meaning of the name Peloponnesus is "the island of Pelops;" and the country would in fact be an island, were it not united to the rest of Greece by the narrow Isthmus of Corinth. The chief city of Laconia was Sparta, or Lacedæmon—the rival of Athens, and the type of whatever was most vigorous and rugged in the Greek character, as the other was the representative of Hellenic art and culture. With its ridges of mountains, and its deeply-indented gulfs, the Peloponnesus presents a certain resemblance to the leaf of a plane-tree, to which it has frequently been compared.

It is impossible to conceive a country better fitted than Greece to rear a community of mariners, owing to the proximity of the sea to nearly every part, and to the great variety of waters, open, narrow, or land-locked, receding into bays and sinuous channels, or expanding into the outer main, which are at hand to develop the skill of the navigator. On the land, the prevalence of mountains tended to produce a strong and active people, devoted to freedom and self-rule; though it should perhaps be added that the isolation of the several commonwealths, each in its girdled valley, created and preserved that proneness to separation and mutual antagonism which was often the bane of Greece. Another advantage possessed by the Greeks was the extraordinary beauty of their climate, which, by its brilliance and purity, seemed to refine, exalt, and clarify the very senses of those who lived within its delicate and subtle influence. Accordingly, the Hellenes became the most artistic race in the world, and at the same time the most lucid thinkers on all subjects touching the operations of the human mind. Of course the climate of Greece varied in some respects according to the situation of the States; but the general characteristics were pretty much the same throughout. The summers were hot, but tempered by sea-breezes; the winters sufficiently cold to re-invigorate, yet not so severe as to be distressing to animal life. In comparatively modern times, the extensive destruction of forests has rendered the climate of this country much hotter and more arid than of old, and, by shrinking up its streams, has brought sterility on many a region once noted for its verdure or its productiveness. But, even within the present century, Byron spoke with transport of the marvellous beauty of Greece; and the sky still glows with azure or amethystine tints above the steadfast glory of the mountains, and the changeful sapphire of the sea.

Among the early inhabitants of Greece were the Pelasgi—a primitive race belonging to the Aryan or Indo-European branch of the human family. In the language of Biblical ethnology, all of that branch were members of the Japhetic stock, descending from Javan, the son of Japheth, and from his sons, Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim. But this does not give us any exact account of the development of the Pelasgians as a separate race, and in truth but little is known of them, though, for that very reason, the amount of learned speculation has been great. Whether these people were absolutely the earliest occupants of Grecian soil, or dispossessed others less civilised than themselves, may be doubtful; but the later Greeks regarded them as aborigines. Herodotus says that the whole of Hellas was at first called Pelasgia, and the race is frequently mentioned by ancient authors as occupying the Peloponnesus, Thrace, Thesprotia (a part of Epirus), Attica, Bœotia, and Phocis. The same tribes appear also to have spread into the

islands of the Ægean, along the coast of Asia Minor, and over a large portion of Italy. It is probable, likewise, that they are to be traced in Macedonia and some other places. If they had their original seats between the Caspian and the Euxine, as some have supposed, they doubtless entered Greece from the north; but nothing is known with certainty as to their movements. They are believed to have been a theocratical race, from whose religious ideas the rudiments of the Hellenic system were possibly derived. The degree of their civilisation cannot have been great; but it was sufficient to remove them from mere barbarism. They cultivated agriculture and some of the useful arts, and their architecture, though rude, was not devoid of interest.



THE VALE OF TEMPE.

Certain architectural remains are indeed the only tangible relics that we now possess of this remote and obscure people. The oldest constructions in Greece are the walls of Tiryns, the ancient Tirynthus, about two miles from Nauplia, on the road to Argos. The ruins are situated in that part of the Peloponnesus which is called Argolis, and therefore show that the Pelasgi were not confined to Northern Greece. So great is the antiquity of these masses of rugged stone that the Greeks of the historic ages used to say they were built by the Cyclops; and on this account, as well as their enormous size, they are often denominated Cyclopean. They were certainly standing in the days of Homer; yet they exist to the present moment, like the cliffs and mountains of Nature herself. Similar remains are found at Mycenæ, and in various cities of Greece and Italy, as well as on the western coasts of Asia Minor; and in all these localities the Pelasgi are believed to have settled. From an examination of the several specimens, it appears that the walls were always built of vast polygonal blocks of stone, varying in size and form, and retained in their places simply by their own weight and dimensions. Between the larger masses are pieces of a smaller size, to fill up the gaps; but no mortar, or cement of any kind, has been used. In later ages, the manner of Pelasgian

architecture became less primitive, and the blocks of stone—as we see in some of the Greek and Etrurian cities—were laid for the most part in horizontal lines, though of an irregular character. The fortifications of Tiryns, which were reared upon the summit of a rocky height, covered a large area, and consisted of walls the average thickness of which is twenty-five feet. They were evidently very elaborate constructions, and included postern-gates, bastions, projecting defences, covered galleries and approaches, towers, upper and lower fortresses, and all the usual concomitants of a place of strength. At Mycenæ, still more remarkable structures of Pelasgian origin are yet visible. The Gate of the Lions presents the earliest known example of sculpture in Greece, and the carving is not devoid of a certain force and freedom, though technically faulty. The Treasury of Atreus, or Tomb of Agamemnon, in the same city, is a subterranean building, covered with a dome, and distinguished by some degree of ornamentation. Other edifices of a like character may yet be studied at Mycenæ and elsewhere; and they show that the Pelasgi had advanced considerably beyond the condition of mere nomadic hordes.

The appellation of Pelasgians continued to be given to existing communities as late as the fourth century before the Christian era. Although we speak of these people as a single race, they were in truth a collection of separate tribes, bound together by a common language and history. The distinguishing names of the subdivisions it is needless here to repeat; but the non-Pelasgian tribes must not be passed over in silence. Of these, the principal were the Caucones, the Leleges, and the Thracians. That the populations so called had an affinity with the Pelasgians—that they equally belonged to the great Indo-European race—may be taken as certain; yet it is probable that they were distinct bodies, although some inquirers have held a different opinion. The Caucones at one time dwelt on the north-western side of the Peloponnesus, and were also to be found in Arcadia. The Leleges, in combination with the Carians, are said to have originally occupied Ionia, in Asia Minor, whence they afterwards removed, first into the islands, and then on to the Greek continent, where they established themselves in the southern part, especially in Messenia. The Thracians are reckoned among the early inhabitants of Bœotia; but it is uncertain whether they were also the progenitors of the nation known at a later period by the same name. Very little can be affirmed with confidence of these races. They move obscurely through the mists which cover the early annals of Hellas, as of all other countries, and we can only conjecture that they were rude and primitive tribes, not yet advanced to the dignity of settled nations, yet helping to create the extraordinary people whom we call the Greeks. Nevertheless, it would be erroneous to conclude that they were savages. The Pelasgians in particular, as we have already shown, were a people of some culture, not wholly devoid either of artistic or of mechanical abilities. Herodotus, it is true, applies the epithet of barbarous to their language, which was spoken in his time at two places near the coast of the Propontis, or Sea of Marmora, as well as at a third spot, which cannot be identified. But, to a genuine Greek of the classic ages, everything was barbarous which lay beyond the charmed circle of his own nationality. The Pelasgians undoubtedly formed a large element in the subsequent Greek race; their language was probably akin to the Hellenic; and they had a religious system which affected the beliefs of their descendants.

Many of the Greeks—the people of Attica especially—boasted of being Autochthones, or persons sprung from the soil itself. Sometimes they traced up their origin to a god or demi-god; but it was also generally admitted that foreigners had in various ages entered Greece, and added to the resources of the land by founding colonies, building cities, and teaching the primitive inhabitants a number of useful arts. This opinion, however, was not entertained in the earliest ages of Greek history, and recent investigations have thrown considerable doubt upon the several legends. Athens was believed to have been built by the Egyptian hero, Cecrops, who found the whole of Attica lying waste and desolate, thinly inhabited by a people totally ignorant of the arts of civilised life. To him these forlorn savages were indebted for the institution of marriage, the existence of laws, the cultivation of the vine, and the worship of the deities. The date of the arrival of Cecrops in Greece is given as about 1550 B.C., and on his death he was succeeded by Cranaus, a native of the country. The Phœnicians under Cadmus are supposed to have entered Bœotia in 1493 B.C., and to have founded there a city called Cadmea, which afterwards became the citadel of Thebes. A good deal of poetic fable has gathered about the name of Cadmus. He it was who sowed the dragon's teeth which presently sprang up armed men. His wife was Hermione, the daughter of Venus; Semele, the beloved of Jupiter, was his child; and all his offspring were persecuted by Juno. Stepping out of the region of mythology into that of possible fact, we find it

stated that Cadmus was the first who introduced the use of letters into Greece, and that he taught the worship of several Phœnician and Egyptian gods. Great uncertainty, however, surrounds the nationality of Cadmus, who, according to some authorities, was a Pelasgian, and according to others a Phœnician or an Egyptian: he may even have been a Cretan.

Another of these traditions was to the effect that Danaus, who reigned in Egypt together with his brother Ægyptus, left his own country in consequence of a family quarrel, and, after a visit to Rhodes, where he consecrated a statue to Athene (or Minerva), landed on the coast of Argolis in 1475 B.C., and deposed the native king. His success induced the fifty sons of Ægyptus to follow him into Greece, and they were accepted as suitors by the fifty daughters of Danaus. The father of the young princesses, however, was terrified by an oracle which foretold his ruin by a son-in-law; and he therefore persuaded his daughters to murder their cousins on the marriage night. This was effected in every instance but one: Lynceus was spared, and ultimately acknowledged by Danaus as his son-in-law and successor. The death of Danaus, after a reign of fifty years, is stated to have occurred in 1425 B.C. A monument to his memory was erected in the city of Argos, and Pausanias, who lived in the second Christian century, records that it existed even in his time. According to the legend, the ship in which Danaus made his voyage was the first ever seen in Greece; and it is also said that the use of pumps was introduced into that country by the same innovator. If subsequent reports are to be believed, he gave his name to the warlike tribe of the Danai, whose appellation is extended by Homer to the entire Greek people. In the sixth century before the Christian era, Amasis, King of Egypt, sent offerings to the shrine of Athene at Rhodes, because of its supposed Egyptian origin; and many allusions to the early sovereign of Argolis, and to his daughters, are to be found in Greek literature, which in this matter was apparently the exponent of popular belief. Yet the historic value of the story is at least doubtful, and by some has been entirely denied.

Erechtheus, said to have been an Egyptian, is credited with having sent corn for the relief of a famine prevailing in Attica (about 1397 B.C.), with teaching the cultivation of that cereal, and with founding the Eleusinian Mysteries on the model of the worship paid to Isis along the banks of the Nile. Another Egyptian settler was Lelex, who is believed to have invaded Megara (a territory in the eastern part of the Isthmus of Corinth), and to have commenced there, in 1384 B.C., a dynasty which ruled over the tribe called, after him, the Leleges. Much obscurity envelops the legend of Pelops, who is described as a son of Tantalus, King of Phrygia, but who may have come from some other part of Asia. It is not, indeed, certain that he was an Asiatic at all. If, however, he was a real person, as seems probable, he was the progenitor (dating from 1283 B.C.) of a royal race, distinguished as the Pelopidæ, which for three generations occupied the throne of Argos, and even exercised some authority over the whole of Greece. But for all these narratives, as well as for the statement that one Peteus led a colony into Attica a generation before the Trojan war, there is little substantial basis.* Still, such a basis may not be entirely wanting. The stories are clearly fabulous in many of the details, but may nevertheless have a root in fact.

Considered apart from poetical and romantic features, these legends of frequent migrations from the East into lands beyond the Mediterranean and the Ægean possess a good deal of inherent probability. The civilisation of Egypt and Phœnicia was undoubtedly much older than that of Greece, and the population of the two former countries may easily have become, even at a remote period, so large as to suggest the desirability of forming settlements elsewhere. The Phœnicians, in particular, were a colonising race, and even the Egyptians were not devoid of aspirations beyond their own territory. In the earliest forms of Grecian art traces of an Egyptian influence may be seen, and it is generally admitted that the letters of the Greek alphabet (as, indeed, of other alphabets) are of Phœnician origin. Cecrops, who is described as a native of Saïs in Egypt, placed the city he is said to have built under the guardianship of Athene, whose name it bore; and Athene was the same as the Egyptian goddess Neith, who was worshipped at Saïs, one of the cities of the Shepherd Kings. Cadmus and Danaus are represented by Diodorus Siculus (following Hecatæus of Abdera) as leaders of the alien race when they were driven from the Nile valley—an event which the Greek writer associates with the exodus of Moses and his countrymen; and it is obvious that the expulsion of the pastoral dynasty from Egypt must have distributed over other lands the population thus violently displaced.

* The dates here assigned to the several colonisers are those most generally accepted; but others have been conjectured, and all are uncertain.

There is probably no truth in the statement that the semi-fabulous Sesostris conquered Thrace, and even Greece; yet it is a reasonable inference, from all we know of ancient history, that colonies from Egypt, though perhaps not of the pure Egyptian stock, entered the country afterwards called Hellas. The affinity between the religious forms of the Greeks and those of the Egyptians has been made more clearly apparent by the results of modern scholarship; but it was acknowledged by Herodotus himself, notwithstanding his feelings of national pride. It is true that if the colonies from Egypt were formed of races foreign to the genuine Nile population, they would seem not very likely to carry with them the rudiments of Egyptian faith. Yet individual Egyptians of the old stock may have accompanied the migration, as Moses and the Israelites were accompanied by "a mixed multitude" when they quitted the land of bondage. Still, it is not probable that any nation of either Hamitic or Semitic origin contributed largely to the Hellenic race, which doubtless was mainly derived from Pelasgian and other Aryan tribes.

The Pelasgi retained possession of the Peloponnesus from 1700 to 1550 B.C., but in the latter year were succeeded by the Hellenes—a martial race, who are supposed to have entered Southern Greece from the regions north of Mount Othrys. The original seat of the Hellenes, according to Aristotle, was near Dodona, in Epirus, whence they spread into Thessaly, and from Thessaly penetrated into other portions of the Greek peninsula. Poetical tradition affirmed that the Hellenes were descended from Hellen, a son of Deucalion and Pyrrha. Even, however, if we grant the historical reality of Hellen, it is obvious that the stories related of him are chiefly fabulous. Some accounts say that he was the son of Zeus, or Jupiter; but his parentage as the son of Deucalion is scarcely less mythical. Deucalion was the son of Prometheus, and nothing is related of him that is not poetical. It was in the reign of Deucalion that the earth was visited with the deluge associated with his name. The details of this flood are in many respects very similar to those of the Noachian cataclysm; but the incidents which were supposed to follow the subsidence of the waters possess a wholly different character. By the oracle of Themis, Deucalion and Pyrrha were directed to repair the loss of human life by casting certain stones behind them; when the stones thrown by Decalion became men, and those thrown by Pyrrha became women. Such was the fanciful being from whom Hellen, the progenitor of the Hellenes, was supposed to be derived. But the Promethean ancestry of this hero seems to suggest the northern origin of the race called after him. The punishment of Prometheus was carried out upon the mountains of Caucasus, lying between the Euxine and Caspian Seas: it is therefore not improbable that the remote ancestors of the Hellenes may have found their way from that rocky country by the northern shores of the Euxine, and, after crossing the Danube, have descended upon Epirus and Thessaly. Remotely, they were akin to the Pelasgians; but they formed a different nationality, and were proud of their race, and of their separate traditions.

Although the Caucasian origin of these people is a not unreasonable conjecture, it was in Epirus that they first obtained a definite historical position. The vicinity of Dodona was the original Hellas, and the country about that celebrated forest is described by Hesiod under the name of Hellopia. The sanctuary of Dodona was called Hella, and the oracular oak is said to have been supernaturally revealed by a dove to a woodcutter named Hellus. We have here, in all probability, the origin of that name which was afterwards applied to the whole of Greece; and, if so, we may perhaps dismiss the son of Deucalion to the regions of fable. According to Aristotle, the Hellenes were originally called Græci, and from this term the more modern name of the race is obviously derived. But it should be observed that the name of Greece was never applied to the country by the people themselves. It was the term by which the Romans distinguished the land, and must have been derived from that early tribe which afterwards took the appellation of Hellenes. Even the name of Hellas was at one time confined to a small district of Thessaly, was then extended to the whole of Thessaly, and was finally applied to the entire Greek peninsula, with the exception, it would appear, of Thessaly itself, to which the Pelasgi returned after the Trojan war, and so gave to that particular region a character which was no longer recognised as Hellenic. In the early ages of Grecian history, and even as late as the period of Homer, the people whom we now call Greeks were usually known, not by any general appellation, but by the names of the several tribes, which differed a good deal as to language, institutions, and national genius. The Achæans, however, were the principal tribe, and Homer often makes them stand for the rest.

The most distinctive characteristic of the Hellenes, when first they invaded Southern Greece, was military valour. We have no reason to believe that they were superior in the arts of peace

to the Pelasgians whom they subjugated. It is not unlikely, indeed, that in these respects they were less accomplished than the earlier population. But, in primitive conditions of society, the more hardy, daring, and energetic race is the one which prevails, even though its intellectual acquirements may be of a meaner order than those of the races with which it comes into victorious contact. The Hellenes were in fact a nation of warriors, sustaining themselves, not by labour, nor yet by arts, but by repeated conquests, which extended their power over one district after another, and gave them possession of the land by a sort of feudal lordship. In this way they transmitted to after days the more stern and martial elements of the Greek nature, while at the same time they were capable of assimilating any higher forms of civilisation which they may have found, and of developing them to an extent, and in a variety of directions, not previously known to any other people in the world.

Following the old legend of Hellen, we find it stated that he had three sons—Æolus, Dorus, and Xuthus, the last of whom was the father of Achæus and Ion. From Æolus and Dorus, and from Achæus and Ion, proceeded the four chief divisions of the race, namely, the Æolians, Dorians, Achæans, and Ionians. Such, at least, was the belief of the Greeks; but, of course, if we strike Hellen out of the list of historical characters, his three sons and his two grandsons must equally disappear. Nevertheless, the four divisions of the Hellenic race above enumerated have a clearly defined position in the annals of Greece, whatever may have been the origin of the names by which they were distinguished. The principal seats of the Æolians were in Northern Greece, but they were found also along the western coast of the Peloponnesus, and in the islands of the Ionian Sea. The Peloponnesus, however, was in the main occupied by the Achæans, who especially predominated in the south and east of that peninsula. The Ionians were planted along the northern coast of the Peloponnesus, whence they extended eastward into Attica, so that the Athenians belonged mainly, if not entirely, to this branch. The Dorians were confined to the southern slopes of Mount Œta, an eminence near the northern extremity of Ætolia and Doris, upon which Hercules is fabled to have consumed himself with fire.

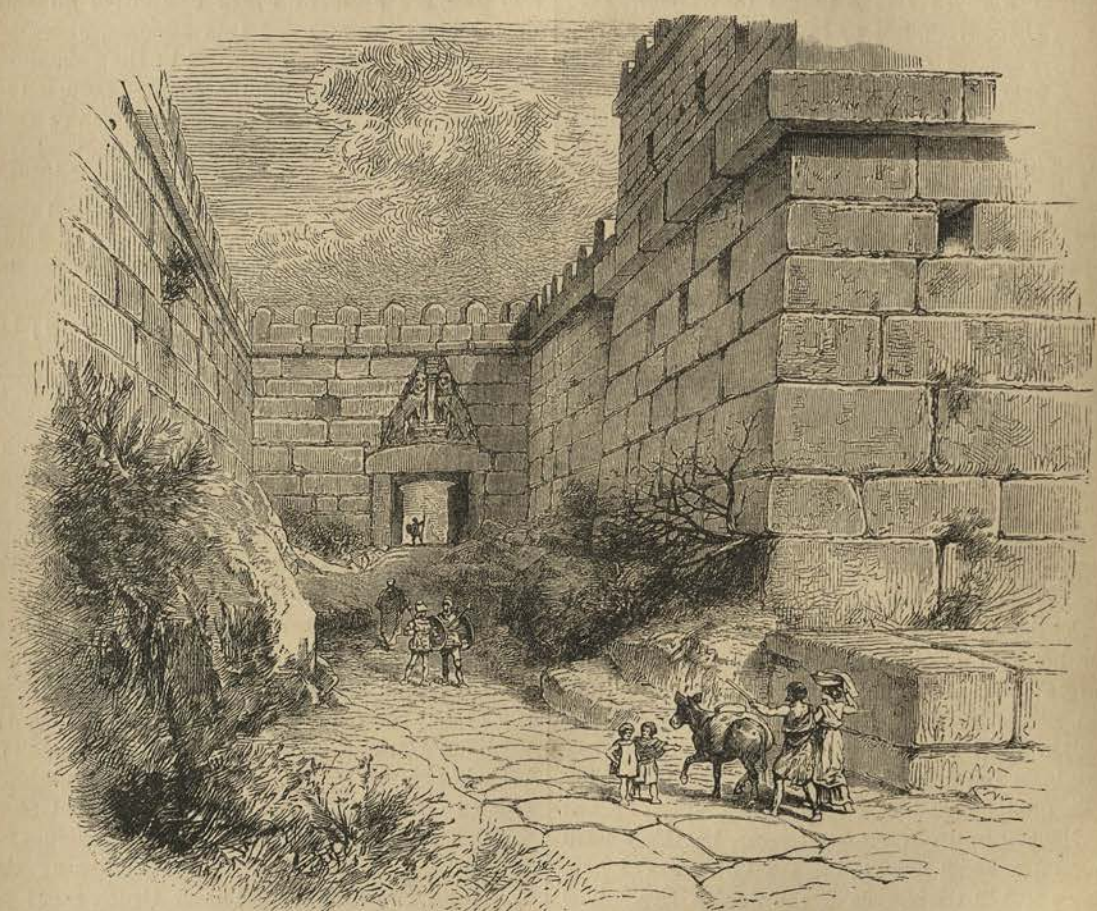
According to the Greek mythologists, Hellen left to his eldest son, Æolus, the kingdom which he had established in that part of Thessaly lying between the Asopus, and the Enipeus; and from this son the inhabitants of the country were called Æolians. The second son, Dorus, led a colony to the foot of Mount Parnassus, where he built the cities of Boiæum, Cytineum, and Erineus, to which Strabo adds the city of Pindus. Xuthus, the third son, founded the Attic tetrapolis, consisting of Œnoe, Marathon, Probalinthus, and Tricorythus, but was not otherwise distinguished. As already stated, he was the father of Achæus and Ion, the elder of whom committed an accidental homicide, and fled into Laconia, where his posterity remained until expelled by the Heraclidæ, after which they invaded the country occupied by the descendants of Ion, dispossessed them of their inheritance, and called the land Achaia. Some accounts, however, state that Ion succeeded his maternal grandfather, Erechtheus, on the throne of Attica, which then assumed the name of Ionia. Nevertheless, it is certain that the Ionians peopled the country called Achaia, the situation of which was at the northern end of the Peloponnesus; but they may subsequently have entered Attica, and helped to colonise it. The same tribe afterwards effected settlements in that part of Asia Minor, lying on the eastern coast of the Ægean, which was called Ionia. But the history of the Ionians is particularly obscure, and has gathered about it an unusual amount of fable. By the Athenians, Ion was described as a son of Apollo. It has even been doubted whether the Ionians were Hellenes at all, and not rather Pelasgians, as Herodotus asserts. The Achæans likewise have by some been regarded as a remnant of the old Pelasgian stock; but the general opinion is in favour of the Æolians, Dorians, Achæans, and Ionians, being all branches of the Hellenic family. The probability seems to be that the earlier population of Greece, which was in the main Pelasgian, was subjugated, rather than dispossessed, by the Hellenes; that it formed the bulk of the later Greek race; but that in some localities the Hellenic element prevailed more than in others.

A modern historian of much authority has observed that, of the four divisions of the Greek nationality, the Æolian was the one which spread most widely, and at all times occupied the greatest part of Greece with its name and language; that the Achæans were those whose appellation was commonly used by Homer to include all the Hellenic tribes which fought before Troy; and that the Dorians and Ionians rose into celebrity at a later period, but then acquired a degree of fame and power which far surpassed that of the other branches of the nation.* Perhaps we

* Thirlwall's History of Greece, Vol. I., chap. 4.

shall not be far wrong if, speaking roughly, we say that the Æolians prevailed in Thessaly and Ætolia, the Dorians in the middle parts of the country, the Ionians in Attica, and the Achæans in the Peloponnesus. The statement, however, can only be made with many qualifications, such as we have already indicated. All four divisions were to some extent scattered, and frequent migrations took place from one part of Greece to another. The several tribes were also commingled in the islands, in the settlements of Asia Minor, and in the Greek colonies generally. Such of these shiftings of population as occurred in pre-historic times are so obscure, and have been made the subject of so many conflicting theories, that in a work like the present it would be inexpedient to pursue the labyrinth any farther than has been done in the foregoing sketch. Later movements will fall into their proper places as the narrative proceeds.

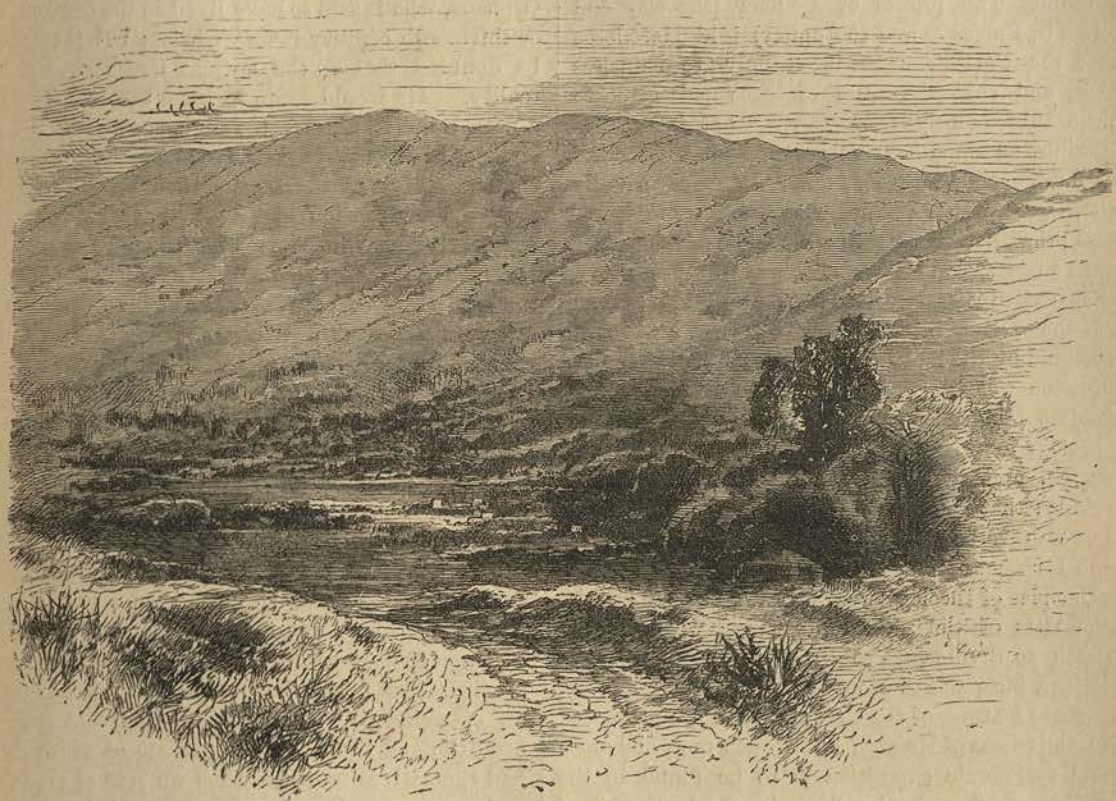
The first appearance of the Hellenes in Thessaly seems to have been coincident with the supposed arrival of Cecrops from Egypt. This was in 1550 B.C.; but certain doubtful events in Greek history, dependent rather on Hellenic tradition than on any precise evidence, are said to have occurred still earlier. Sicyon is reported to have been built, and the kingdom called after it to have been established by Ægialeus, in 2089 B.C. Inachus, a son of Oceanus and Tethys, and the father of Io—altogether a very mythological personage—founded the kingdom of Argos, according to the usual chronologies, about 1856 B.C., in the twentieth generation before the Trojan war. The reign of Ogyges in Bœotia and Attica is set down as having commenced in 1796 B.C., and the famous deluge of Ogyges is referred to 1764 B.C., or a little lower down. The ancestry of this monarch is as mythological as that of Inachus; but the inundation of Ogyges is doubtless a reality, though encrusted with some poetical exaggerations. It is believed to have been caused by the overflowing of a river, or from the Bosphorus bursting



GATE OF THE LIONS AT MYCENÆ.

into the valley of the Mediterranean. According to some accounts, the flood covered the whole of Greece; but the probability is that it was confined to Attica, which, by an incredible tradition, is said to have lain waste until the arrival of Cecrops, more than two centuries later.

The deluge of Deucalion was supposed to have occurred two hundred and sixty-one years after that of Ogyges, being placed in 1503 B.C. By



THE SITE OF DODONA.

many of the ancient writers, this was regarded as an universal flood; but it was probably confined to Thessaly, and may have been caused by an unusual fall of rain, and the consequent overflowing of the Peneus, the waters of which, in the opinion of the later Greeks, were delivered by a shock which rent asunder the rocks of Tempe, and made an outlet into the Thermaic Gulf. That some such events as these semi-fabulous Hellenic deluges occurred at remote periods of European history can hardly be questioned; but Ogyges and Deucalion are figures possessing little, if any, historical reality. The earlier Greek writers make not the least mention of Ogyges, and by the later Greeks the epithet "Ogygian" is frequently applied to things that are involved in impenetrable obscurity. It has even been suggested that the name of the Bœotian king is derived from a root signifying darkness or night; but the etymology is doubtful. The story of Deucalion is clearly poetical, as we have before observed. Of the reign of Ogyges it is related that it was rendered memorable by another extraordinary circumstance —namely, by so strange a revolution of the heavens that the planet Venus changed its colour, diameter, form, and course. These are the figments which we have to accept in lieu of facts in the early ages of Grecian history.

The religious system of the Greeks had a very important influence on the national character and actions. It was a polytheistic system—whether originally so, or by the corruption of a higher faith, may be matter for discussion. Some of the elements of this religion may have been derived from the Pelasgians, whose superior deities personified the heavenly bodies and the living powers of Nature, while the inferior were a species of dæmons (in the good sense of the term), exercising a degree of influence on the fortunes of men, and helping

to carry on the operations of the universe Other portions of the Greek faith were probably drawn from Egypt and Phœnicia, which preceded Greece in the civilisation of the world. But a people so imaginative as the Hellenes were certain to add a good deal from the stores of their own mind; and the final shape of this religion, which we now call a mythology, arose between the Ægean and Ionian Seas, excepting in so far as it was afterwards modified—and that to no very great extent—by the Romans. The priests of Dodona (the city and forest in Epirus sacred to Jupiter) told Herodotus that the Pelasgians sacrificed only to nameless gods, and that the titles of these gods came to them subsequently from Egypt.* It is not impossible, as some have suggested, that the leaders of foreign colonies which entered Greece in early times were priests imbued with the monotheistical idea; that, perceiving the hopelessness of impressing such a conception on a primitive and ignorant race, they personified the various attributes and functions of the Deity in imaginary forms, which were accepted by the multitude as facts; that the higher doctrine was imparted only to the educated, and became less and less understood as the popular theology found its way into poetry, into ordinary speech, and into the habitual currents of men's minds; that the accession of military chieftains to power drove the sacerdotal caste into the recesses of the sanctuary; but that the earlier and simpler principles of theology were preserved to the last in the rites of the several Mysteries, which it was death to divulge. Yet these are merely speculations, incapable of proof.

Some features of the Greek religion are preserved in the poems of Homer; but a much more elaborate and systematic exposition is to be found in the "Theogony" and the "Works and Days" of Hesiod, who was formerly said to have lived before the age of the great epic poet, whom Herodotus makes contemporary, but who is now thought to have succeeded him by about a hundred years, so that his century would probably be the eighth before our era. The "Theogony" is a poem giving an account of the origin of the world, and of the birth of the gods; but it is believed that this work is a somewhat faint repetition of an earlier production, which may have contained a more philosophical and less mythic account of the beginning of things. As it is, however, Hesiod is one of our chief authorities for the religious system of the Greeks. Two other sacred poets, much earlier even than Homer, exist only in the vague immortality of tradition. These were Orpheus and the first Musæus. Of the works of Orpheus, nothing whatever remains that can be relied on as genuine; a few verses, scattered about the writings of later authors, are all that exist of the other singer. Doubtless, both had much to do with fixing and perpetuating the Greek religion, and it is not unlikely that the theological system of Hesiod repeated, though possibly in a modified form, what they had delivered. A great deal of poetic fable has grown up around the name of Orpheus, who is said to have lived in the fourteenth or thirteenth century before Christ; but it cannot be doubted that to the ancient Greeks he was a reality. He would seem to have been not merely a poet, a musician, and a religious teacher, but a civiliser of the savage tribes with which he came in contact. Most of the legends connected with the primitive civilisation of Greece have reference to the Thracians, who were afterwards regarded by the Hellenes as barbarians. The early Thracians are held to have been a different people from the later, and are said to have occupied Pieria, a country on the borders of Macedonia and Thessaly; but at any rate it is as a Thracian that Orpheus appears in ancient story, and, according to some accounts, Musæus belonged to the same race, if he was not actually the son of Orpheus. These traditions increase the probability that much of Greek culture and religion came from the north.

It is a remarkable feature of the Greek religion that the gods appear to have been a part of the nature of things, not elevated above that nature in the capacity of absolute creators or disposers. To the Greek mind, the gods were subject to fate, or, speaking less metaphorically, to that general condition, or those fixed laws, out of which they had themselves issued. Thus we read of an older and a younger dynasty of heavenly beings. Yet, apart from this ultimate conception of mysterious and inevitable destiny, the Greek idea of Jupiter or Zeus seems not to have differed greatly from other Theistical ideas, save the very highest. In the Pantheon of the Hellenic race, Zeus was the "father of gods and men." There were, it is true, eleven other superior gods, and a multitude of minor divinities; but Zeus was the supreme power, always excepting that other power in the background, which was incapable of any exact definition, but which seems to have represented the principle of endless change, of perpetual decay and renovation, lying beyond the divine essences, as well as beyond the human accidents of a day. The oracle of Jupiter, or Zeus, was situated at Dodona, a city held in particular veneration by the Pelasgians, whether they called the deity by

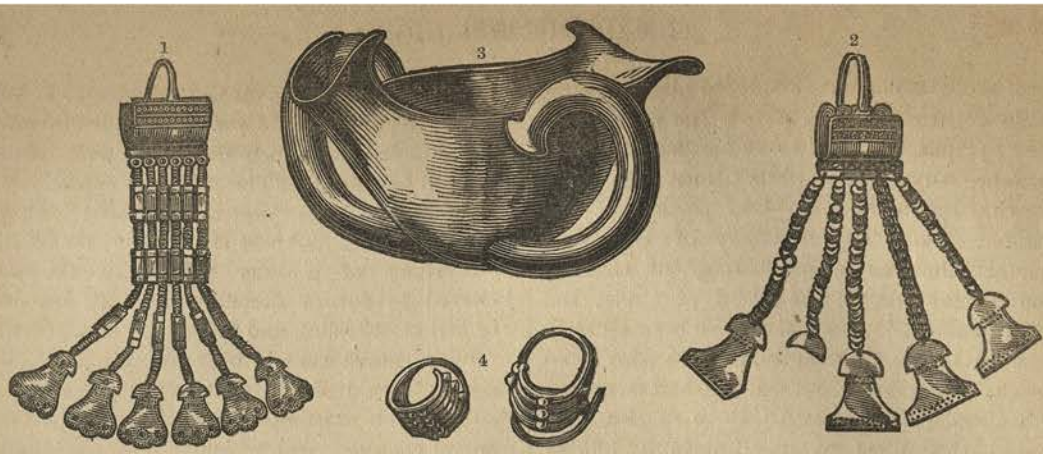
* Herodotus, II. 52.

either of those names, or worshipped him, as Herodotus asserts, in nameless awe. The summit of Mount Olympus was held to be his peculiar seat, and another Olympus, in Asia Minor, was identified with his worship in that portion of the Hellenic world. The sanctuary of Olympian Jupiter at Elis was famous throughout Greece; and on Mount Ida, in the island of Crete, the principal of the gods was said to have been secretly brought up by the Corybantes, to save him from the cruelty of his father, Saturn, who had devoured his other male children. All these stories, grotesque as they seem to us, contain a hidden meaning, and point to the one great fact that, in the opinion of the Greeks, even the highest of the gods were subject to the laws of Nature. What those laws were, it was beyond the power of the most learned Greek to define, and it is equally beyond our power to say whether the Hellenes, as a rule, believed in a supreme and disembodied Divine Intellect, or whether the basis of their very Theism was not a species of Atheism.

Jupiter, as the king of all the gods and goddesses, and the actual father of several, was the divinity most generally worshipped by the whole Hellenic race. Other divinities were more particularly honoured in special neighbourhoods which they were supposed to favour. From the higher deities proceeded a number of demi-gods, nymphs, dæmons, and superhuman intelligences, who were identified with all external modes, and with all the operations of Nature. The Greek beheld or imagined some mysterious being, and usually some beautiful shape, in the mountains, in the woods, in the rivers, in the sea, in the winds, in the storm, in every object to which his eyes were directed, and in every manifestation of vitality to which his thoughts were turned. Cities had their genii, and men their tutelary spirits. If this was a superstition, it was surely the most fascinating, and in the main the most kindly, that the world has ever known. How far the religious opinions of the Greeks affected their moral character, is a question too large to be here discussed. Some features of the Hellenic faith were undoubtedly gross, sensual, and debasing; but it cannot be said that such were the only elements of that religion, nor is it likely that the better part should have been wholly inoperative, while the worst was productive of deep and wide-spread consequences. The Greek religion and the Greek character acted and re-acted on one another, and it is perhaps impossible to determine which was the motive power. But both the character and the religion of this wonderful race have had a prodigious influence on the world, and it would be showing ingratitude for many splendid results if we doubted that, upon the whole, that influence has been beneficent. The gods were capricious, but they punished wrong-doing more often than they rewarded vice. Apart from the materialistic speculations of a later philosophy, the Greek believed in future accountability for his deeds. He had his Elysium and his Hades, and, if neither exercised much control over his actions—as may perhaps be said of corresponding dogmas in other systems—the existence of such conceptions argues a moral consciousness, which, in however imperfect a way, coloured the religious order whereof it formed a part. The ideas of a future state entertained by the Greeks were extremely vague, and partook of the dimness and languor which were imputed to the disembodied soul itself. But a future state of some kind was supposed, and perhaps it was not less impressive because of the vaporous and almost formless mystery in which it was enshrouded.

The religious ceremonials of the Greeks were conducted on a scale of extraordinary splendour. Processions, libations, votive offerings, incense, music, and dancing, were among the features of those ceremonials, the scene of which was in temples of great size, and of an architectural character unsurpassed for dignity and grace. Sacrifices were offered to the gods, consisting generally of brute animals, but occasionally, it is to be feared, of human beings, though it is doubtful whether the latter practice found any sanction in the more antique ages. The priests were not so highly privileged as in many other countries. Some of the most important rites of religion could be performed by the father of a family in his household, or by the prince on behalf of his people.* But the priests were the depositaries of religious knowledge, and they had the management of the oracles. Many of these official exponents of religion were women: priestesses were the most favoured vehicles in conveying oracular responses to the people. To the soothsayers was confided the interpretation of omens, which, by a species of esoteric science, might be extracted from the flight of birds, the changes of the atmosphere, the aspects of the stars and planets, the appearances presented by the entrails of a victim, and even from accidental circumstances. Thus the mind of an ancient Greek was penetrated with religion; and we cannot fully understand his political and social life without reference to these active and elementary ideas.

* Thirlwall.



TROJAN RELICS. (*From Dr. Schliemann's Collection.*)
1, 2. Gold Earrings. 3. Gold Drinking Vessel. 4. Gold Rings.

CHAPTER XXIII.

GREECE IN THE SEMI-FABULOUS AGES.

The Age of the Heroes—Hercules; Theseus—The Reign of Theseus—Early Condition and Polititical Institutions of Athens—The Island of Crete—Minos and his Conquests—The Argonautic Expedition—Story of Œdipus—Troy and its Situation—Siege of Troy, and Capture of the City—Mythical Character of Helen—Later History of Troy—Homer and his Poems—Theory of Wolf with Respect to the Composition of the Homeric Epics—Other Theories on the Subject—Greek Admiration of Helen—The Return of the Heroes.

HISTORY and Poetry are so closely united in the early annals of Greece that it is not always possible to separate the two. In most of these legends, however, there is at least the chance of some degree of truth lying at the bottom; and in any case they are so intimately mingled with the life of the Greek people that to omit them would be to suppress a very important element. The early history of Hellas is the history of certain persons who are called Heroes, and who were supposed to be endued with a superhuman nature, to be of exceptional strength and height, and to be so eminent in virtue, force, and prowess, as to become fitting objects, after death, for divine honours. Hesiod records that the gods in the first instance made the golden race of men—beings of perfect virtue and perfect happiness; secondly, the silver race, much inferior to their predecessors, unsympathetic with one another, and impious to the gods; thirdly, the brazen race, hard, cruel, and warlike, constantly engaged in implacable hostilities, and finally perishing by each other's hands; fourthly, a far juster and nobler race, which, however, like the others, disappeared in time from the earth; fifthly, and lastly (so far as the world had then proceeded), the iron race, in which a small amount of virtue was overweighted with a very large amount of vice. The golden men had been translated into terrestrial dæmons (or, as we should now say, guardian angels), charged with the reward of good and the punishment of bad deeds. Those of silver had become the favoured of the underworld; those of brass were despatched to Hades without any privileges; the fourth race, on being removed from the earth, found perpetual happiness in the Islands of the Blest; while the fifth was threatened with extinction at some future date. It was the fourth of these generations which produced the Heroes.*

The most famous of the Heroes was Hercules, considered from the point of view of his human nature. He was the son of Jupiter by Alcmena, the wife of Amphitryon, and the story of his twelve labours is known to all. Possibly there may have been, in the early period of Greek history, some beneficent leader, strong both in body and in mind, who executed many great works for the advantage of the country. On this frame, supposing it to have existed, was embroidered so large an amount of fable that it is now difficult to think of Hercules as anything but an imaginary being. Some of these fictions may have had a Phœnician

* Hesiod's Works and Days, Book I.; Grote's History of Greece, Part I., chap. 2.—By Hesiod's men of gold, silver, &c., we are not to understand men formed of those metals, but men possessing the qualities which they were supposed to symbolise.

origin: at any rate, it is certain that Hercules was worshipped in Asia and Africa, as well as in Europe. According to several ancient authors, there were many persons bearing this name, which in its Greek form is Heracles. No fewer than forty-three have been mentioned, and modern scholars distinguish the Theban Hercules from the Dorian and the Peloponnesian.

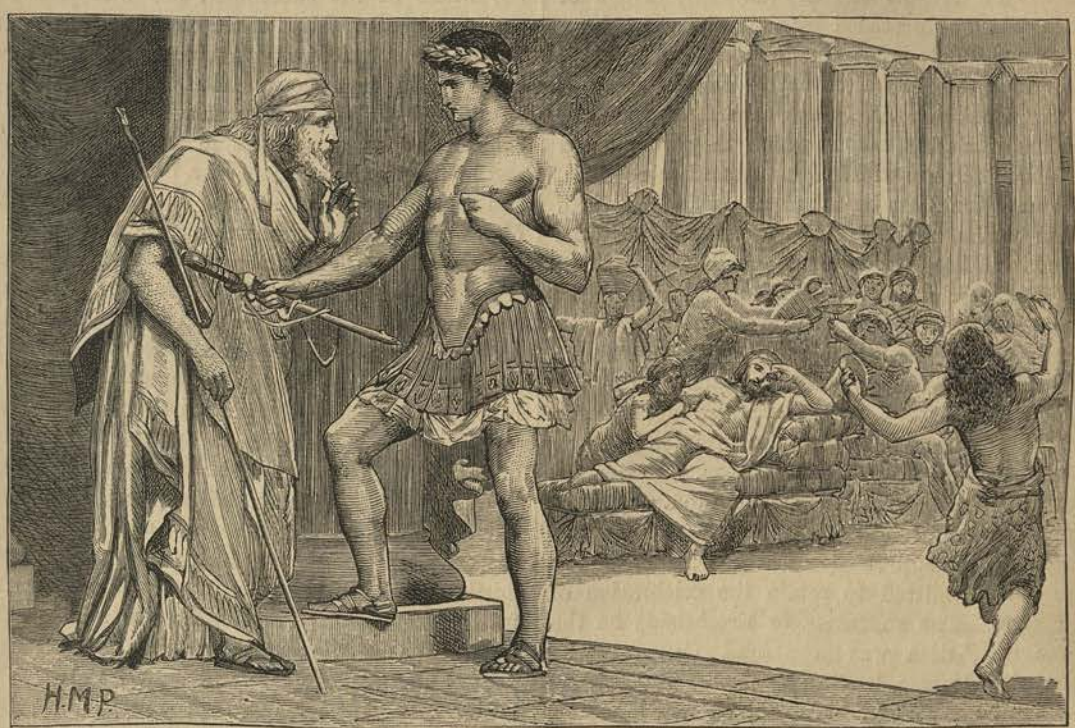
The second of the Greek Heroes was Theseus, who is said to have been contemporary with Hercules, though he belonged to a younger generation. Theseus was one of the early kings of Attica, but was preceded by a number of others, who have little root in fact. Some truth, however, is probably discoverable in the story of the war which the Athenians carried on with the islanders of Eubœa, and in which they were aided by Xuthus, the son of Hellen. Another relation, which may doubtless be taken as partly historical, is that which recounts the contest between the Attic king, Erechtheus, and the Thracian king, Eumolpus, the latter of whom founded at Eleusis, in connection with the Mysteries of Ceres, an order of priests, the headship of which continued in his family for twelve hundred years. After the death of Erechtheus, which occurred during this war, the command of the Attic forces is by some reported to have devolved on Ion, who by his military genius brought the struggle to a successful termination, and compelled the Eleusinians to acknowlege the supremacy of Athens, though they were still permitted to retain the celebration of their rites. The successor to Erechtheus on the throne of Attica was a second Cecrops, who migrated to Eubœa, leaving his former sovereignty to a son named Pandion, who must not, however, be identified with that earlier and more mythical Pandion, during whose reputed reign there was such an abundance of corn, wine, and oil, that people said Bacchus and Ceres had personally visited Attica. The second Pandion was expelled from his kingdom by a rival branch of the royal family, and took refuge in Megara, where, having married the daughter of the reigning king, he succeeded to the throne. Ægeus, the eldest son of Pandion II., invaded Attica after his father's death, possessed himself of the land, and shared it with his brothers. The wife of Ægeus was Æthra, daughter of Pittheus, the sovereign of Trœzen, in Argolis—a man celebrated for his learning and wisdom. Theseus was the child of this union; but in later times the popular hero was said to have been the son of Poseidon, or Neptune, since none but a god could be the progenitor of so illustrious a chieftain.

It was at Trœzen that Ægeus married Æthra; it was there also that the infant Theseus was born after the return of his father to Athens. The birth of the child was kept secret from the Athenians, because Ægeus feared the jealousy of his nephews, the Pallantides, who expected the crown for themselves. In his youth, however, Theseus went to the Attic capital, and, by means of a sword which his father had purposely left at Trœzen, proved his identity. He had already, on his road there, cleared the country of robbers and wild beasts, and the whole of his subsequent life was passed in similar exploits. Most of the circumstances related of him are so manifestly fabulous as to belong exclusively to mythology. But it may fairly be assumed that there really was such a man; that he exhibited unusual prowess in repressing anarchy, and laying the foundations of a better social order; and that he possessed some of the highest qualities of a warrior and a statesman. On his arrival at Athens, the Pallantides endeavoured to assassinate him; but he crushed the conspiracy at the outset, and punished the offenders with death. Some time after this, the young prince sailed for Crete, to deliver Attica from the tyrannical exactions of Minos, who demanded a periodical tribute of seven youths and seven virgins, to appease the appetite of a monstrous brute, the Minotaur. It is not unlikely that some such tribute may have been enforced by the Cretan sovereign, and that Theseus succeeded in putting an end to it; but the introduction of the Minotaur imparts an element of fable to the story. Plutarch gives a more reasonable account of the matter when he says that the youths and maidens were detained in Crete as captives, and consecrated to religious services. Having destroyed the evil custom, and, according to the fabulous part of the narrative, killed the Minotaur, Theseus set out on his return to Athens. It had been agreed between him and his father that a white sail should be hoisted if the expedition had ended fortunately; in the contrary event, the usual black sail was to appear. By an oversight, the wrong sail was exhibited, and the old king, Ægeus, threw himself in despair from the Cecropian rock into the sea which, in the popular belief, was called, after him, the Ægean.

Theseus is said to have succeeded to the throne in 1235 B.C. His government was distinguished by wisdom, mildness, and liberality. Political rights were conferred upon the people, or rather upon the upper classes, and Theseus reserved to himself nothing more than the command of the armies. A court was instituted for the transaction of civil affairs, and much attention was given

to religious observances. Even before the death of his father, the youthful hero had distinguished himself by renewing the Isthmian Games, which had been founded on the Isthmus of Corinth in honour of the sea-god Palæmon; and at a later period, when he was possessed of regal power, the same tendency to establish festivals and sacrifices was observable in the conduct of Theseus. The population of Athens increased under the rule of this prince; but his reign was not invariably prosperous. Without repeating the mythological fables which have been recorded of Theseus, it may here be stated that he was engaged in many wars, which were attended by varying fortunes, and that, during his prolonged absence from the kingdom on one of these occasions, Mnestheus, a descendant of Erechtheus, took possession of the throne, to the exclusion of the children of Theseus. On the return of the latter, he endeavoured to drive out the usurper, but without success. He then retired to the island of Scyros, where for a while he was hospitably received by the king, Lycomedes. One of the legends, however, says that Lycomedes ultimately yielded either to a feeling of jealousy, or to the bribes of Mnestheus, and threw his guest down a deep precipice into the sea. Other accounts state that the fall of Theseus was accidental; but in either case he would appear to have died without recovering the throne which he had once so powerfully filled. He had entirely lost his credit with the Athenian people, and for a long time after his death was disregarded, and almost forgotten.

At a later date, the son of Ægeus was honoured by the Athenians as the most illustrious of their heroes. A large growth of fable sprang up out of the scanty facts of his life, and he became the great example of national glory, and of what in the Middle Ages was called the chivalrous spirit. He was the triumphant subduer of evil, the rescuer of the oppressed, the vanquisher of monsters, the civiliser of barbarous tribes; although, like Lancelot, and many others of the same fraternity, he was not always superior to the impulses of his own strong passions. We may, indeed, trace a resemblance between the character of Theseus and that of the knight-errant, as depicted in the romances of Celtic nations; but it is rather the legendary than the historic Theseus who is capable of such a comparison. In this place, however, we are concerned chiefly with Theseus the king and legislator, and in these capacities there are sufficient facts to show that he is worthy of respectful memory. He united the whole of Attica in a single government, by incorporating under one



THESEUS AND ÆGEUS.

constitution the several townships which had been almost completely independent of one another. The city of Athens, which until then had hardly extended beyond the rock which afterwards constituted the fortress, was enlarged under his judicious administration. The nobles were encouraged to reside there, and the people were divided into three classes, of which the first were patricians, the second agriculturists, the third artisans. Although Theseus divested himself of a considerable amount of governing power, which he might probably have exercised without dispute, it would be entirely erroneous to say that he organised a democratic rule. The offices of state, and those connected with religion, were conferred entirely on the aristocratic body, and a strict division of classes was observed in all the great concerns of life. It was not until much later that popular power was established at Athens. Yet, after his temporary obscuration, Theseus was held in the highest honour by all Athenians. His bones were supposed to have been found, at the conclusion of the Persian war, in the island of Scyros, and Cimon, who professed to have made this discovery, conveyed the remains to Athens, and deposited them with great pomp in a temple built to the memory of the warrior-king. A festival in honour of Theseus was celebrated on the eighth day of every month, but with peculiar solemnity in the month called Pyanepsion. On the death of Mnestheus, the children of Theseus recovered the Athenian throne, and thus the line of the hero was restored to the kingdom which he had done so much to found.

The story of Theseus directs our attention to the island of Crete, and to its great monarch, Minos, a character as much mixed up with fable as the Athenian hero himself. Crete is situated in the Mediterranean, near the southern extremity of the Ægean Sea. It has been called Macaris, or the Fortunate Island, on account of its fruitful soil and healthy air; and certainly it would be difficult to conceive an insular territory more richly endowed by Nature, or more happily situated for commerce. Aristotle has observed that it seems fitted by its geographical position for the command of Greece. It is one of the largest islands in that part of the world, and in ancient times, if tradition speak truly, it contained a hundred cities. The population was probably

THE THESEUM AT ATHENS.

derived from Phœnician, Pelasgian, and Dorian colonists; though whether the last-named had entered the island at the time of Minos is doubtful. Crete was associated with some of the most important parts of the old Hellenic faith; for, as we have already shown, it was the nursing-place of Jupiter when, as an infant, he was concealed there from his father, Saturn. Minos was the great law-giver of Crete, and his institutions are said to have been copied by Lycurgus the Spartan. Little is related of him that is not obviously fictitious; yet, as a body of laws associated with his name remained in force far into historic times, it would be assuming too much to say that this Cretan monarch was altogether a myth. The promulgation of the laws is assigned to 1642, 1406, and 1340 B.C.; but not one of these dates agrees with the date of Theseus, though the two heroes are alleged to have been contemporaries. How Minos acquired his power is not recorded. He is said to have given himself out as a son of Jupiter, and to have declared that his system of laws was dictated to him by his divine sire in a cave of Crete. This, however, is a device not unusual with primitive law-givers, who desire to impose a somewhat irksome code upon races little inclined to restrictions of any sort. What is most probable with respect to Minos is that he was a man with a genius for command and organisation, and that he welded the semi-barbarian tribes of Crete into a strong community. Having raised a powerful navy, he swept the Ægean Sea of pirates, seized upon the Cyclades, and established various colonies, over which he maintained his predominance. He then made an expedition against Megara and Attica, and imposed a heavy tribute on the people—a tribute which, as we have seen, had probably some relation to the religious system favoured in Crete. He appears even to have extended his conquests as far as Sicily; but it is believed that in that island he was treacherously slain. His fleet also was destroyed on the same occasion; yet a Cretan settlement was none the less established in Sicily. Such are the chief circumstances in the life of Minos, so far as they have any relation to fact or probability. That this sovereign was really a great conqueror, as well as a great lawgiver, seems to be established, not merely by tradition, but by those traces of Cretan rule which are to be found in various directions. The name of Minos was anciently given to the isle of Paros, and also to two cities of the Cyclades. Evidences of Cretan dominion are to be found in Chios and Rhodes, in Caria, in Lycia, in Lemnos, and in Thrace. How much farther they extended it is impossible to say; but it is certain that such writers as Herodotus, Thucydides, and Aristotle, believed that the Cretan rule had been widely spread and powerful.

The Argonautic expedition is another event belonging to the age of the Heroes, which is supposed to have extended from 1384 to 1184 B.C. This expedition is referred by the chronographers to about 1225 before our era. According to the mythical story of the adventure, the young Thessalian prince, Jason, was ordered by his kinsman, Pelias, who reigned at Iolchos, to conduct an expedition to the eastern extremity of the Euxine. Pelias had in fact seized upon the throne, which rightfully belonged to Jason, and was therefore desirous to get him out of the way. Jason was required to avenge his relative Phryxus, who had been murdered by the king of Colchis, and to obtain the restoration of a certain golden fleece which had been stolen by the same monarch. A large galley, numbering fifty oars, was manned by adventurers from all parts of Greece. The expedition was successful; but before its accomplishment Jason had to perform a number of exploits, such as those with which we are familiarised in fairy tales, when a youthful hero of more than ordinary valour is to be commemorated. The story of Medea is connected with the Argonautic expedition; but this is so entirely poetical as to be out of place in the present narration. The germ of truth in the romance of Jason and his companions is probably but slight; yet we must not conclude that it is wholly wanting. From primitive times the Greeks were a maritime race, and the voyage to Colchis may have been one of the earliest of those explorations into distant seas which were undertaken by the Hellenic people. It is also conceivable that religious ideas and traditions were mixed up with this fable of the Golden Fleece. The story was for many ages one of the most popular in the circle of Greek legend, and its place in poetry would alone give it an interest, apart from whatever modicum of fact may be involved in its luxurious overgrowth of fiction.

To the same remote and problematical age we must refer the story of the royal house of Thebes, made ever-memorable by the dramatic treatment of Æschylus and Sophocles. According to this tremendous legend, Laïus, King of Thebes, was informed by an oracle that he should perish by the hand of his son. His infant child, Œdipus, was accordingly given to a servant, with orders that he should be put to death; but the man simply exposed him on Mount Cithæron, where his life

was saved by a herdsman of Polybus, King of Corinth. He was brought up as the son of that monarch, but one day, after he had grown to be a man, was told by the Delphic oracle that he should kill his father, and marry his mother. Believing that Polybus was his parent, he resolved never to return to Corinth, and, led by the inexorable fate that overshadowed him, made his way towards Thebes. In a narrow pass he encountered Laïus, the insolence of whose attendants provoked him, in a fit of wrath, to slay both them and the king himself. He then proceeded to Thebes, where he found the people in a state of extreme consternation at the ravages of a monster called the Sphinx, which, having propounded a riddle to the Thebans, devoured all who were unable to answer it. The throne was now occupied by Creon, a brother of Jocasta, the wife of Laïus, and consequently the mother of Œdipus. Creon promised the crown of Thebes, and the hand of Jocasta, to whomsoever should solve the enigma. Œdipus undertook the task, furnished the true response, and delivered the land from the Sphinx, which dashed its head against a rock, and perished. The second of the pre-ordained crimes was then fulfilled by the marriage of Œdipus to Jocasta, by whom he had two sons and two daughters. These had grown up when a terrible pestilence devastated the city, and it was supernaturally intimated that this would not be stayed until the murderer of Laïus was banished. Inquiries being set on foot, it became evident to Œdipus that in killing Laïus he had killed his own father, and that in marrying Jocasta he had committed a crime hardly less terrible. Overcome with horror, Jocasta hanged herself, while Œdipus thrust out his eyes, that he might never again see the light which, for him, had been polluted by such impious deeds. The two sons of Œdipus expelled him from the city, and he cursed them as he departed. Led by his daughter Antigone, he reached the village of Colonos, near Athens, where there was a grove sacred to the Eumenides, or Furies. Here he received the rites of expiation from the hands of Theseus, and shortly afterwards expired by a calm and painless death, or, according to some accounts, was taken into the bosom of the earth, which opened to receive him. Nevertheless, the dark and awful fate attaching to the house of Œdipus did not end here. The sons of that unfortunate prince agreed to share his authority, but after a while the eldest son, Eteocles, expelled his brother Polynices from the throne. The latter went to Argos, to implore the assistance of King Adrastus. He received the monarch's daughter in marriage, and returned to his own city with a strong army, headed by Adrastus and five other chieftains, who, together with Polynices himself, formed the "Seven against Thebes" celebrated by Æschylus in one of the most memorable of his plays. The attack upon the city was defeated, and the two brothers fell by each other's swords. In the following generation, the descendants of the persons forming this expedition marched once more against Thebes, and the city, on being taken, was destroyed.

The next great event in the semi-fabulous history of Greece was the Trojan war, with respect to which innumerable theories have been formed, but which still remains, as doubtless it will always remain, within the twilight of early legend and scholarly speculation. The whole subject is surrounded with so much uncertainty that commentators are not agreed as to whether Troy, or Troja, was a city, the capital of Troas, or a country of which the metropolis was Ilium. It is generally, however, regarded as a town, and Ilium is supposed to have been the citadel. Troas was a district on the Ægean coast of Mysia, in Asia Minor, reaching as far south as the promontory of Lectum, now called Cape Baba. To the west and north-west, it was bounded by the Ægean Sea and the Hellespont, while its eastern boundary was an extensive ridge of the Asiatic Mount Ida. The country, therefore, can be very exactly defined, yet the place of the city was long doubtful. Various suggestions have from time to time been made; but all were open to some objection, and the traveller Bryant went so far as to maintain that no such city as Troy ever existed. This, however, appears to be an untenable hypothesis, and recent events have thrown some light upon the position of the ancient town. In 1872, and subsequent years, Dr. Schliemann, a German explorer, discovered in the Troad, a long way beneath the surface, the remains of temples and other buildings, which he believed to be those of the original Troy. He also brought to light a large collection of objects of art, executed in gold and other metals; and the antiquity of the buried city was plainly shown, not merely by the depth at which these relics were discovered, but by the fact that one series of buildings was superimposed upon another, which could only have happened in a long course of ages. The excavations of Dr. Schliemann were conducted at Hissarlik, not far from the Hellespont; so that, assuming the German scholar's inference to be correct, we are now able to fix the locality of King Priam's capital. The people of this district in ancient times are held to have been of Thracian origin, mixed with Æolic Greeks. At the period

of the Trojan war, they had apparently attained a fair amount of civilisation; indeed, it may be doubted whether the Greeks of Hellas had then advanced so far. Nevertheless, the Trojans had only one city of importance—Troy itself: all the other towns were little better than straggling villages. The first ruler of Troas was Teucer, a mythical king of Phrygia, who is stated to have introduced among his subjects the worship of Cybele, and the dances of the Corybantes. From this supposed king, the Trojans are sometimes called Teucrians; but the reality of the monarch is by no means certain. One of the descendants of Teucer was Tros, from whom the names Troy and Troas are derived. Ilium was called after Ilus, a son of Tros. Under Laomedon, the city was fortified by the assistance of Neptune and Apollo; but Troy was taken soon afterwards by Hercules, and ultimately restored to Priam, the son of Laomedon.

The poetical version of the siege of Troy, as recounted by Homer, ascribes the war to the abduction of Helen from the house of Menelaus, her husband, by Paris, the son of Priam. Menelaus was a brother of the celebrated Agamemnon; and Helen, who is famous as the most beautiful woman in the world, was the daughter of Tyndarus, King of Sparta. The other suitors of Helen, on learning that her choice had fallen on Menelaus, chivalrously bound themselves to defend her against any violence or assault. After the marriage of Menelaus and Helen, Tyndarus resigned his crown to the former, who shortly afterwards departed to Crete. Paris arrived in Sparta about the same time, and left it in company with Helen. When the fact came to the knowledge of Menelaus, he reminded the Greek princes of their oath, and the Trojan war ensued, as a consequence of the act which Paris had committed. At the summons of the former suitors, the whole of Greece flew to arms, and a large force assembled at Aulis, in Bœotia. In the first instance they applied to Priam for the restoration of Helen; but this was refused, and the army then crossed the Ægean under the command of Agamemnon. The Grecian force was numerous, but that of the Trojans was even more so, for Priam received assistance from the neighbouring princes of Asia Minor, as well as from Rhesus, King of Thrace, and from Memnon, an African monarch, the nephew of Priam, who marched to his uncle's succour at the head of twenty thousand Ethiopians and Assyrians.* The siege of Troy was distinguished by extraordinary heroism on both sides, and the names of Achilles the Greek and Hector the Trojan (both of whom were slain during the war) were long regarded as the highest types of physical strength and military virtue. After a series of operations which spread over ten years, and involved an immense amount of slaughter, Æneas, Antenor, and some other of the Trojans, betrayed the city into the hands of the Greeks, and it was given up to the flames. The date of this occurrence has been the subject of as many disputes as the situation of Troy itself. The Arundelian Marbles state that Priam's capital was taken and burned on the night following the 23rd of the month Thargelion (June 11th), 408 years before the First Olympiad, which would be about 1184 years before the Christian era.† Some critics, however, have assigned both earlier and later dates; but the subject is incapable of being brought to a demonstration. Troy was more than once rebuilt in later times, though, it has been thought, not exactly on the same spot. One of these cities was founded by Antigonus, a general of Alexander the Great, who called it Antigonia-Troas; but it appears never to have flourished. The Romans, who pretended to be derived from the Trojans led by Æneas from the burning city, were ambitious of restoring the fortunes of Troy, when they had acquired that part of Asia; and Julius Cæsar even conceived a design of making it the Roman capital, and of transporting there the Senate and the whole Roman people. These projects, however, were never carried into effect. The new Troy crumbled away, as the older had wasted in the flames; earth and herbage covered the site of both; and the locality of this famous city was bequeathed to succeeding times, as one of the most fruitful subjects of learned discussion.

We make no pretence to discriminate between the true and the false elements in this story of the Trojan war. Doubtless the narrative is not wholly fictitious; but it has been overlaid with such a mountainous heap of poetic fancy, and perhaps of

* The story of Memnon has been related and discussed in Chapter VIII. of this History.

† The Arundelian Marbles are a fine collection of statues, busts, and inscriptions, obtained in several of the Greek islands, and elsewhere, by commissioners acting on behalf of Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel and Surrey, and afterwards Earl of Norfolk, in the reigns of James I. and Charles I. These objects are now at Oxford, and for that reason are sometimes called the Oxford Marbles. The chronology of the chief inscription ranges from 1582 to 354 B.C., and, when perfect, extended to 264 B.C. This inscription goes by the name of the Parian Chronicle, because it is supposed to have been executed in the island of Paros, about 263 B.C. It is in a very defaced and broken state, but is regarded as an authority for many dates in the ancient history of Greece.

religious symbolism, that it is very difficult indeed to say how much we should accept. At the present day, Homer is the chief authority for the alleged events of the siege; but Homer wrote as a poet, and cannot be accepted as a historian, although he may have embodied in his writings some fragments of actual truth. Helen would seem to have been a purely mythical person. Herodotus classes her with Io, Europa, and Medea. By Homer she is represented as the daughter of Jupiter. Her brothers were the divine twins, Castor and Pollux, called by the Greeks the Dioscuri; and in several places, but especially in the Peloponnesus, she herself received divine honours. The whole series of events is mixed up with supernatural beings and impossible circumstances; so that we are compelled, in a great measure, to banish the story of Troy to the realm of fable, while admitting that some of its details may really have occurred. According to popular belief, there was a still earlier siege of Troy, arising out of the Argonautic expedition; in the course of which, Hercules, who was one of the Argonauts, considered himself to have been ill-treated by the Trojan king, Laomedon, and consequently (as already indicated) assailed and sacked his capital. The probability is, that in very early times the Greeks made a series of attacks on the communities of Asia Minor, and that from some of their adventures on the western coast arose the legend of the siege of Troy.*

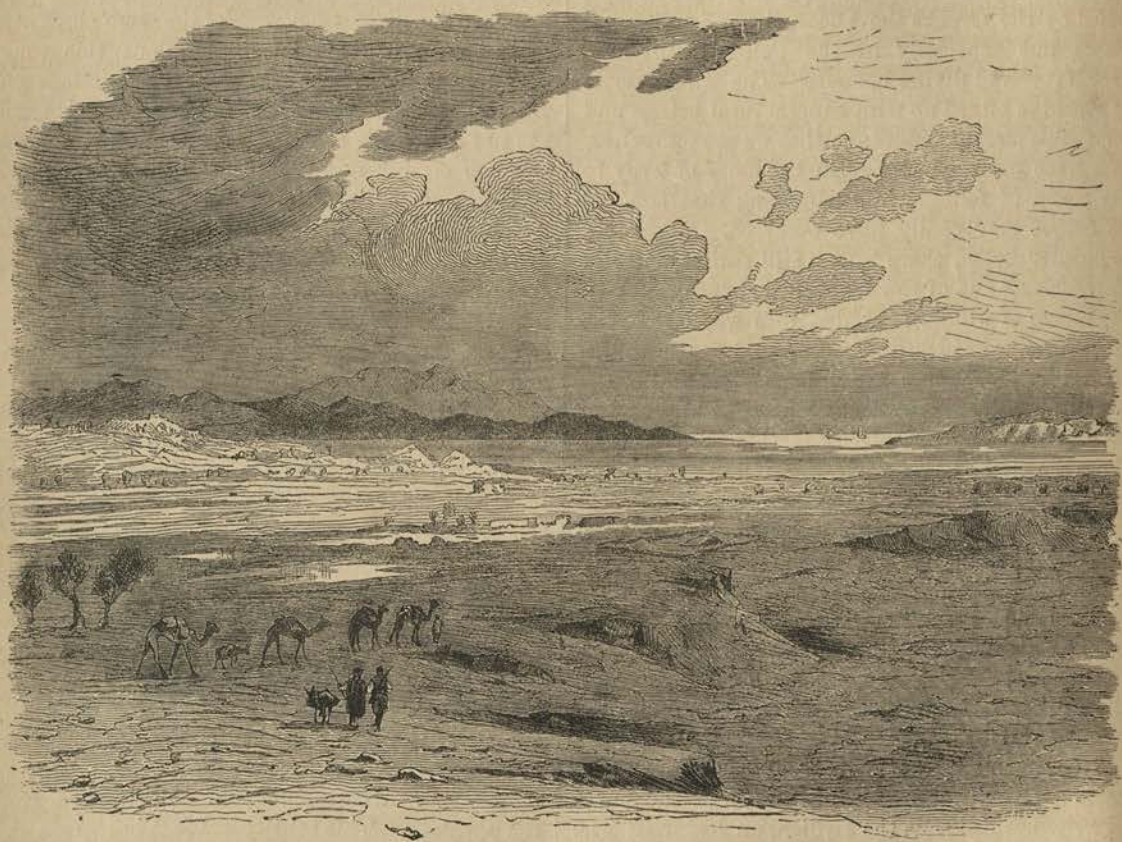
Although the city was set on fire by the Greeks in the hour of their success, it does not seem to have been entirely destroyed at that time. After the death of Priam, who was slain by Neoptolemus, the son of Achilles, during the sack of Troy, the country and its capital (as it would appear from the testimony of Homer) were for some years ruled over by the Æneadæ, a branch of the house of Priam. Xanthus the Lydian, an historian who lived in the fifth century before the Christian era, states that the Trojan monarchy was finally destroyed by a Thracian tribe which crossed the Bosphorous into Asia; but it could never have been a very powerful State after the disastrous events resulting from the abduction of Helen. Xerxes, and subsequently Alexander the Great, visited what they believed to be the city of Troy; but, although this was on the site of the old metropolis, it must have been a much later collection of buildings. When Alexander was there, the once famous city was nothing more than a miserable village, remarkable only for a temple of Minerva; and soon afterwards it disappeared altogether. The new city, built some way off, was long regarded as the genuine metropolis of Priam.

It is impossible to glance, however briefly, at the siege of Troy, whether in its fabulous aspects, or with regard to its supposed probabilities, without making some remarks upon the position of Homer in the ancient Greek world, as well as in his relations towards classical literature. It must be recollected that the poems of Homer were regarded by the Hellenes, not only as the greatest examples of the poetic art, but as a standard of religious faith. Yet the same obscurity which surrounds his theme, envelops this wonderful poet also. A library of dissertations on Homer and his works has been produced from age to age; yet it cannot be said that the subject is much clearer now than it was in former days. That the poet lived in a very remote time, is certain; but whether he flourished in the tenth or the ninth century before our era, or at some other epoch, is a matter which cannot be determined. The place of his birth is equally unknown. Smyrna, Chios, Colophon, Salamis, Rhodes, Argos, and Athens, have each been advanced as the native place of Homer: the probability is that he was a Greek of Asia Minor. Tradition says that he was blind, and the people of Chios affirm that in the latter years of his life he established a school in that island. Doubtless he was not a man of high social position, and the extraordinary minuteness with which he has described several parts of Greece, continental and insular—a minuteness which may be recognised to the present day by travellers in that part of the world—renders it not unlikely that he was a species of wandering minstrel, who went about from place to place, reciting either the poems which he had himself composed, or those which he had learned from the populace. This conjectural fact has given rise to a speculation which has been much discussed among the learned, viz., that the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey" were not the productions of any one man, but were compounded out of a number of traditionary poems, long floating about Greece, and at length crystallised into the two definite forms with which we are so well acquainted. Some approach to this theory was made in the later Greek ages by the grammarians of Alexandria, who attributed the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey" to two distinct authors, without finding many persons to agree with them. In modern times, men of great learning and penetration have inclined to the belief that these famous poems had a fragmentary origin; but it was not until the close of the eighteenth century that this

* Thirlwall's History of Greece, Vol. I., chap. 5.

idea received anything like general attention or elaborate exposition.

At that period, the German critic, F. A. Wolf, who in 1795 published a large mass of introductory matter to the poems of Homer, argued that certain independent epic songs were collected and arranged by Pisistratus, about 550 B.C. That Pisistratus did in fact collect and arrange the several writings attributed to Homer—as Ezra, about a hundred years later, collected and arranged the sacred books of the Hebrews—is sufficiently well known; and it is also on record that the poems of the old Greek bard had by that time fallen into a state of great confusion. In the early ages of Greece, as of other countries, poetry was chanted to the music of a harp or lyre, and was mainly, if not entirely, preserved in the memory of successive generations by continual repetition. Large numbers of these epic songs, treating of the deeds of gods and heroes, were composed before the time of Homer; but all have long since perished. Wolf admitted that writing was known in Homer's days, and occasionally used in inscriptions; but he denied that any portion of the "Iliad" or "Odyssey" was preserved in this manner until the time of Pisistratus. By some, indeed, it has been doubted whether writing of any kind was used by the Greeks as early as the Homeric age, and in the poems of Homer himself there is only one allusion, and that of a very ambiguous nature, which can be construed into a reference to the art of penmanship. But, whether or not the knowledge of writing existed when these great epics were composed, it is still quite conceivable that in so rude an age the story of the Trojan War may have been perpetuated rather by the human voice than in any exact literary form. So much may fairly be urged in favour of the theory of Wolf. On the other hand, it is generally (though not universally) admitted that both the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey," but especially the former, exhibit a degree of unity, and a perfection of artistic development, which seem to argue that they proceeded—with the exception, perhaps, of a few interpolations—from a single genius, not unacquainted with the resources of literary culture.

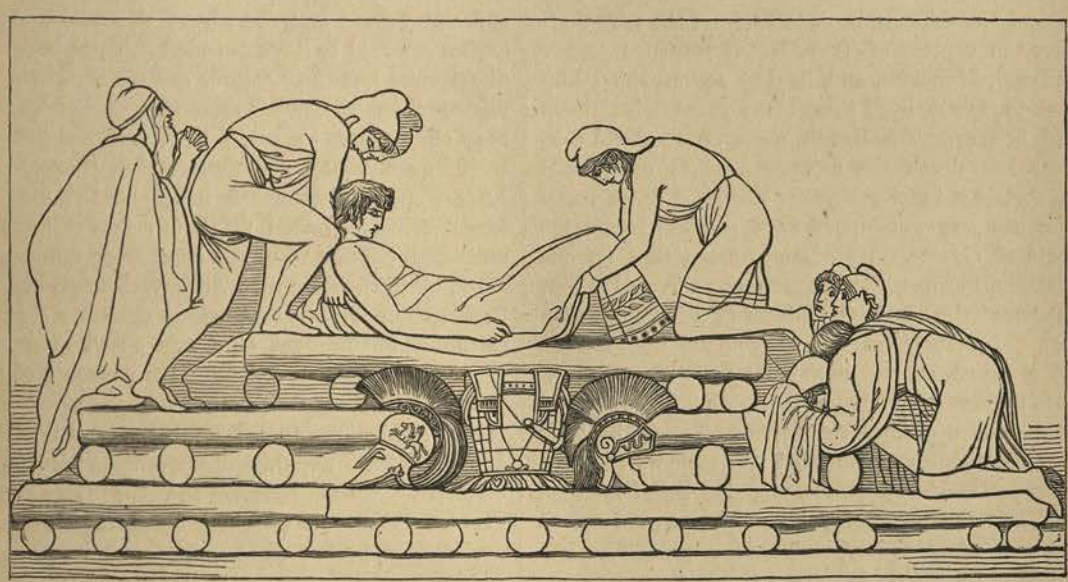


THE SITE OF TROY.

In the opinion of Wolf, the poems of Homer

were brought into European Greece by Lycurgus, in the ninth century B.C., and there recited by a class of men called Rhapsodists, who are supposed to have been endowed with so strong and vivid a memory that they could repeat many hundreds of verses after hearing them two or three times, though it is almost certain that corruptions, either intentional or accidental, would sometimes arise. These persons wandered about the country, like the troubadours and minstrels of the Middle Ages (except that they used no musical accompaniment), reciting, wherever they stopped, portions of the poems thus laboriously acquired. They were accustomed, as Wolf believes, to select certain parts which formed a complete action, such as "The Pestilence in the Grecian Camp," "The Dream of Agamemnon," &c., and to recite them separately. These, according to the theory we are now describing, were the scattered fragments which, after being brought together by Pisistratus, formed the two great poems known as the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey." Wolf still further maintained that the stories thus produced were from time to time retouched, arranged, and enlarged by successive generations of literary men, and that, finally, the Alexandrian grammarians of the fourth and third centuries before the Christian era gave to the poems the precise literary shape which they now possess. This view of the Homeric epics has been strongly opposed by men as learned as Wolf; and it is certainly remarkable that the numerous Greek authors who mention Homer, always refer to him as the originator of the works which are associated with his name.

The speculations with regard to the poet are indeed numerous, and some are of so wild a character that it may be sufficient to state them, without even the most elementary discussion as to their probability. The French writer, Hedelin, maintained that the name Homer was not a proper name at all, but simply a word meaning "Singer." Hesychius considered that it merely signifies a person who is blind; which equally deprives it of any individual application. Girardet derived it from the Hebrew plural form *Omerim* (words), and alleged that the term was commonly given to poetical narrations of important events. An English critic is reported to have gone so far as to say that Solomon was the author of the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey," which he composed after his religious apostacy.* This is probably the most extraordinary conjecture ever made upon a subject fruitful in ingenuity. The origin of the Homeric poems may in some respects be uncertain; but it can hardly be denied that they belong to the Hellenic nationality, and give expression to the legends, the religion, the feelings, and the ideas, of Greeks.



THE FUNERAL OF HECTOR. (*From Flaxman's Illustrations to Homer.*)

* A statement to this effect is made by Professor Anthon in an addition to the article on Homer in his edition of Lempriere's "Classical Dictionary" (1827), where it is added that "the dissertation was never printed, but exists, in manuscript, in the British Museum." Bentley is the critic referred to; but it seems doubtful whether he ever committed himself to such an absurdity.

Whether both epics were the production of one author, or whether either was, are questions which will probably divide the ranks of scholars into two hostile camps as long as scholarship exists. One point, however, seems to be pretty generally acknowledged: that is, that the latter part of the Twenty-third Book of the "Odyssey," and the whole of the Twenty-fourth, which concludes the poem, are of doubtful authenticity. They are considered to be of inferior merit to the rest of the production, and some of the ancient copies have a mark after the 296th verse of Book XXIII., as if to indicate that what follows is spurious.

A strange comment on the morality of the ancient Greeks may be deduced from the fact that, after the capture of Troy, Helen returned to her husband, Menelaus, and, having accompanied him back to Sparta, lived there many years in happiness and honour. The legend went on to affirm that after her death she enjoyed a state of blissful immortality in the Elysian Fields, and we know that she was worshipped as a goddess in various parts of Greece. Herodotus relates that on one occasion, in answer to the prayers addressed to her, she cured the repulsive ugliness of a little Spartan girl. Instances of her miraculous intervention were numerous, and it was not usually considered that by her intrigue with Paris she had acquired any stain upon her reputation. When the lyric poet, Stesichorus, denounced her memory in terms of considerable bitterness, popular belief affirmed that he was stricken with blindness as a punishment for such gross impiety, and that not until he had formally retracted his censures did he recover the use of his sight. The Egyptian priests told Herodotus that Helen had never been in Troy at all, but that during the whole siege she was detained in Egypt; yet her abduction by Paris was not questioned. The Greeks, therefore, regarded Helen as a woman of light conduct; but this did not in the smallest degree detract from the admiration with which they contemplated her splendid beauty, and the superb influence which she exercised over the fortunes of men.

Although Helen suffered no evil consequences from her offence, several of the Grecian warriors who had besieged Troy were afflicted on their home voyage by many calamities. These were attributed to their impiety in not sparing the altars of the Trojan gods. The return of the chieftains is celebrated in the "Odyssey" (where the misfortunes of Ulysses are particularly described), and in many other ancient poems, several of which are now lost. Some of the Greek leaders reached their native lands without any trouble; but others were involved in adventures that had often a tragical nature, and for years wandered about the world. These heroes are said to have founded colonies in various directions; but their actions are too mythical to be regarded as of much value, though it is possible that they point to some historical realities. In after ages, many communities in Greece, Asia Minor, Italy, and other lands bordering on the Mediterranean, traced up their origin either to the scattered Greeks who returned from the siege of Troy, or to the dispersed Trojans themselves. The termination of the great war is therefore regarded as the commencement of a new epoch in Ancient History. If, however, the poetic records of that war were to be relied on as historic, we ought rather to believe that the most vigorous elements of the Greek population were exhausted in the struggle. Hesiod observes that the divine race of Heroes came to an end before the walls of Thebes, and on the plains of Ilium. Supposing the siege to have really occurred, it doubtless effected a great slaughter amongst the flower of Greek and Trojan manhood. But in all such narratives we must make great allowance for exaggeration; and it is evident from the later events of Grecian history that the finest qualities of the Hellenic people were not developed until after that epoch to which, if we accept it as a reality at all, we must ascribe the Trojan War.

CHAPTER XXIV.

MANNERS AND MIGRATIONS OF THE EARLY GREEKS.

Petty Greek Kingdoms of the Homeric Age—Aristocratical and Popular Assemblies—The Boulé and the Agora—The Nobles, the Freemen, and the Slaves—Punishment of Murder—Encouragement of Local Patriotism—Arms, Armour, and Usages of War—Heroic Friendship among the Ancient Greeks—Social Habits; Position of Women; Banquets—Hospitality as a Sacred Obligation—Arts, Sciences, and Letters—Commerce and Navigation: Geographical Knowledge—Primitive Astronomy—Movement of the Thessalian and Bœotian Populations—The Return of the Heraclidæ—Dorian Conquests in the Peloponnesus—Events in Attica: Siege of Athens by the Dorians—Greek Colonisation of Asia Minor—The Æolic, Ionic, and Doric Settlements.

WHATEVER the origin of the Homeric poems, or however small the amount of historic truth contained in the narrative, it is tolerably certain that the manners depicted in those great productions are the manners of the era in which they were written. We may thus obtain a lively and faithful idea of the state of Greek society in the early ages, and can understand what were the primitive elements out of which the Hellas of a later time arose. In the days of Homer, Greece was divided into a number of petty States, the formation of which, together with their perpetuation as independent and separate communities, was to a great extent determined by the natural disposition of the land into a multiplicity of valleys, shut in by high and rugged mountains. At the head of each of these States was a king, for the republican form of government had not then arisen. The founders of royal houses were men of superior valour and wisdom, and the continuation of the office in one family by hereditary succession was probably sanctioned for its convenience, if it was not rather secured by mere force. It is very questionable whether the king was ever chosen by popular election: the convenient assumption of the monarchs themselves was that they derived their power from Jove by direct descent, and were accountable for their actions to him alone. Yet the manner in which authority was exercised had certain popular characteristics. The king administered justice in public, and often appeared familiarly among his people. But his prerogatives were great, and almost uncontrolled: as long as he retained either strength of body or vigour of mind, he could do very nearly as he pleased. He was not only the leader of the people in time of war, and their judge at all times; his functions included those of a high-priest, and it was he who offered prayers and sacrifices to the gods on behalf of the whole community. Domains were set apart for the support of the sovereign, and his revenue was further augmented by presents, which may sometimes have taken the form of stated dues, though doubtless they were often voluntary.

In the conduct of political affairs, the king was aided by two bodies, whose position in the commonwealth, however, was of a very unsubstantial character. These were the Boulé and the Agora. The Boulé was a council of chiefs—an aristocratical assembly, consisting of a number of hereditary nobles, who, like the king, were supposed to be of divine pedigree, who were all warriors and leaders of men, and who possessed large estates and numerous slaves. To these associated chiefs, the king announced the resolutions he had formed; but, although he often asked their advice, he was under no necessity of taking it. The nobles enjoyed not the least right of controlling the actions of the monarch, nor could they originate any measure. The Agora was a general assembly of the freemen, to whom, when he had consulted the nobles, and finally determined on his course, the king communicated his designs. The scene of this full council—if that can be called a council where no one was consulted—was the market-place or square in the middle of the city: indeed, the word Agora denoted such a place, and was thence transferred to the assembly itself. On public occasions, the king was surrounded by his chieftains, while the people sat in a semicircle at a little distance. After the sovereign had opened the proceedings by signifying his resolves, the nobles addressed the commonalty; but no vote was taken, and only the chiefs were permitted to speak. Nothing, therefore, could be more autocratical than the whole scheme of government; yet in these assemblies we may see the germ of the later democratic system, and it is possible that even in the earliest times some indirect control over the mere caprice of power may have resulted from the presence of the citizens at such gatherings, and from the evidences of popular feeling which could not have been wholly absent.

Society, in primitive Greece, was divided into

three classes—nobles, common freemen, and slaves. The aristocracy were privileged in many ways, and their possession of territorial wealth must have given them great influence over the mass of the people. Their dwellings were generally gathered about the royal palace, which often stood upon a fortified height; but they had rural habitations also. In war, they furnished the king with a body of fighting men; in peace, they probably exercised some species of jurisdiction over their subordinates. They are supposed to have been superior to the rest of the people in height, personal beauty, daring, and mental gifts—a superiority which was attributed to divine lineage, but which, if it existed at all, was probably due to their origin from some more highly endowed race than that from which the humbler classes were descended. The Greek nobles seem to have come of Hellenic stock, while the main body of the people were chiefly Pelasgians. This would account for a certain degree of difference; but it is not difficult to believe that the distinction was exaggerated by those who had an interest in enhancing it. Of the condition of the freemen we are not very well informed; but most of them owned certain portions of the land, which they cultivated on their own behalf. To this rule, however, there were exceptions: some of the freemen were so poor that they had no land of their own, but worked for hire in the fields of the rich. It was the class of freemen that supplied such professional persons as the seer, the bard, the herald, the smith, the carpenter, and others whose work was useful to society, and who were held in respect even by those above them. The institution of slavery was not very widely spread. It was only in the households of kings and nobles that slaves were found, and their treatment was often mild and generous. They were either captives taken in war (and therefore frequently of as good family as their owners), or the wives and children of enemies slain in battle.

Law, among these half-civilised communities, depended entirely upon usage and tradition. As there was no legislation, so there were no statutes. Some of the most important principles of morality were sanctioned and protected by religion; but it is to be feared that a good many questions of right, as between man and man, were determined by the strong in their own favour, without any regard to general equity. The methods of justice were often singular. The Greeks had a genuine detestation of murder, as a crime horrible in itself, and impious towards the gods. Yet a father or a brother would accept money compensation for the slaying of his relative; and this seems to have been a common practice. It was usual, however, for the homicide to withdraw into a foreign country, and not to return until he had been purified by expiatory rites. We have seen an instance of this in the story of Œdipus. A kind of sanctity attached to the person of the fugitive, who would often enter into voluntary servitude, and whom it was considered abominable not to shelter.* But this does not appear to have resulted from any deficient sense of the guilt involved in such an act as murder. It arose rather from a profound religious impression of the awful relations of the murderer towards the Deity, and from a conviction that his punishment lay mainly within the recesses of the violated conscience. Orestes, until purified of his crime by divine interposition, was haunted by the Furies for the assassination of his mother, Clytemnestra, though the act was committed in revenge for the treacherous murder of his father, and the attempted murder of himself.

War was the ordinary condition of Greece, as of other countries, in the early ages of its political and social development. Quarrels between one community and another, even when both were of Greek race, were not infrequent, and piracy, which was regarded as an honourable pursuit, added the miseries of irregular to those of regular conflict. In both cases, the conduct of the victors to the vanquished was cruel and merciless, though the sanctuaries of the gods were recognised as affording an inviolable asylum to the defeated. The Trojan war, if it is to be regarded as historical, or in any case the tradition of that war, shows the existence of a common sentiment of nationality among the several Hellenic States; but it was long before this feeling was acknowledged to any great extent. The tendency to collision, resulting from variety of interests, was magnified by the subdivision of the Greek territory into numerous petty kingdoms, which often consisted of nothing more than a single town (in itself of very moderate size), and a small amount of surrounding country. The city was everything; the king's subjects were citizens, above all other considerations; and the small communities thus created and fostered were bound together by such an intimate personal familiarity that all beyond their own limits seemed alien. The whole of the adult male population of any State was able to meet in the Agora on great occasions, and opinion was rapidly matured under so close and concentrated a heat of local patriotism.

* Thirlwall's History of Greece, Vol. I., chap. 6.

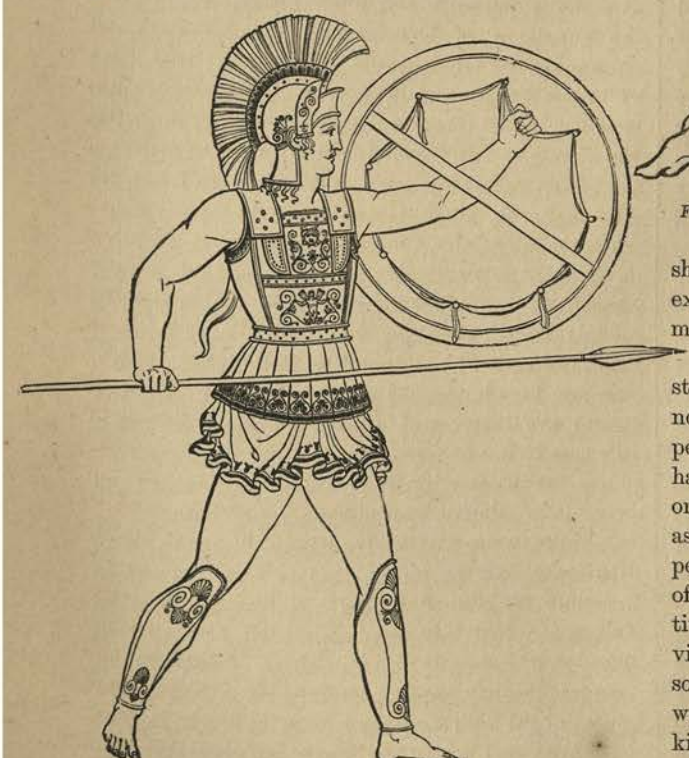
It is impossible to deny that this system had its advantages, the chief of which, perhaps, was the education of the people in the elements of political science; but it sank the nation in the municipality, and multiplied the jealousies and the selfish aspirations of men. Homer depicts for us a state of society abounding in anarchy, violence, and lawless avarice.

The method of warfare adopted by the Greeks of the Homeric age was extremely primitive. The military art can hardly be said to have existed, so that a battle was mainly determined by the individual prowess of the chiefs. Very little was done by the bulk of the armies, which consisted of the commonalty; but it should be recollected that these humble combatants were ill-armed and ill-protected, and had none of the advantages enjoyed by their superiors. The chief, on the other hand, was mounted in a chariot drawn by two fleet horses, which could generally carry him out of danger, if the fight went adversely. Each chariot was guided by a friend or adherent of the principal warrior, who was thus enabled to give his undivided attention to the battle. The person of the chief was defended by a shield, a helmet (provided with a visor), a breastplate, and greaves, or armour for the lower part of the legs. The arms, the greater part of the thighs, and the feet, were bare, and the combatant carried as his weapons two long spears, a sword, and a short dagger. The appearance of the Trojans seems to have been very different. The Æginetan Sculptures (discovered at Ægina in 1812) contain a figure of Paris kneeling in the act of shooting with a bow. He wears the well-known Phrygian cap, and is clad in a tight suit of scale-armour, with the exception of the feet, which, as in the case of the Grecian heroes, are naked, probably for the sake of celerity of movement. In the figure on p. 282, taken from a vase in the British Museum, the legs and arms are bare. The armour of a fallen warrior was considered fair prize by the successful combatant. It was stripped from the dead body with indecent violence, and the corpse itself was often subjected to gross indignities.

Yet, although these savage propensities of our nature were developed among the Greeks by the state of war, and were not held in check by any opinion to their discredit, the ordinary condition of Hellenic society brought forth some excellent qualities in the people. A patriarchial character pervaded the life of families. Parents were highly respected, and the authority of a father was considered sacred. The various members of a family, and even of a clan, were held together by the closest ties of affection, and considered themselves bound to avenge a wrong done to any one of the body—a custom, the rigour of which, in the case of murder, was mitigated by institutions already described. But this sentiment of devotion spread far beyond the limits of the family, and led to results which in many instances were truly noble. A romantic friendship (free as yet from the corruptions of subsequent days) would often exist between one Greek and another; sometimes between a superior and an inferior; generally between a man of mature years and one of undeveloped age. These would be companions in arms, as well as in the pursuits of peace; and either was ready at any time to die for the other. Many such associations are commemorated in fabulous story, which doubtless reproduced, in this respect, the actual customs of Grecian life in early days. Nothing is more conspicuous in the "Iliad" than the affection of Achilles for Patroclus; and other cases of a similar kind are mentioned. The story of Damon and Pythias, though belonging to a much later age (the fourth century before the Christian era), may be cited as a striking instance of heroic friendship, and as perhaps possessing a more historic value than the narrative of Orestes and Pylades, rendered famous by the tragic poets. Damon, it is related by Valerius Maximus, was a Pythagorean philosopher in the Greek colony of Syracuse, in Sicily, which was then governed by the tyrant, Dionysius the Elder. Having been condemned to death by that monarch, he obtained leave to go and settle his domestic affairs, on condition that, on a stated day and at a particular hour, he should present himself at the place of execution. As a hostage for his friend, Pythias voluntarily gave himself into the hands of the despot, with a distinct understanding that he would suffer instead of Damon, should the latter not appear. Damon, however, was true to his engagement, and the story goes on to say that Dionysius, impressed by so touching an example of fidelity, spared the lives of both.

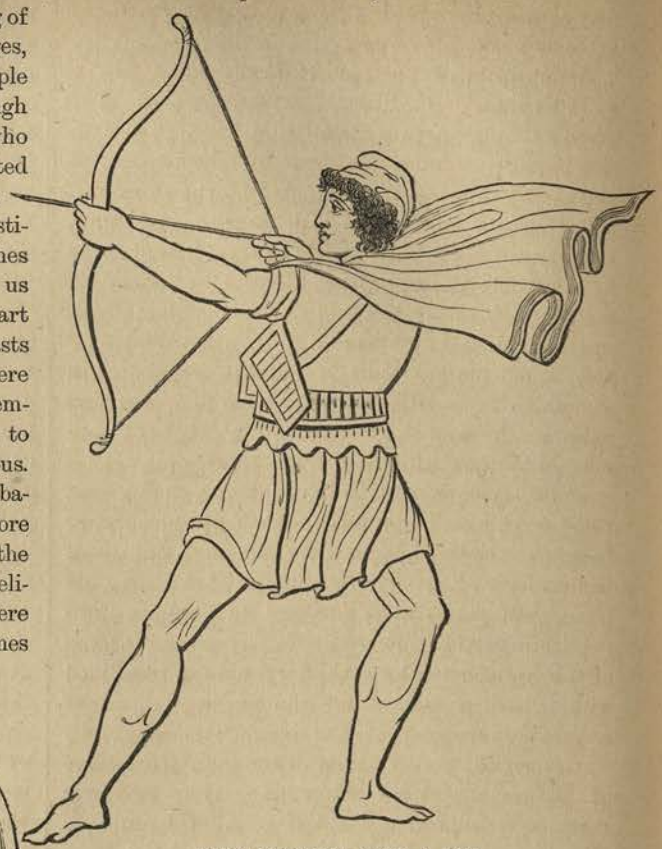
Manners were extremely plain in the age depicted by Homer, and therefore, it is to be presumed, in the time of Homer himself. Although material civilisation had advanced in no slight degree,—although the people lived in cities of some architectural beauty and stateliness,—although the houses of the rich were adorned with works in gold and silver, and costly stuffs were imported from the East,—the personal habits of kings and nobles were distinguished by a very primitive character. These great ones of the earth did not consider themselves too exalted for the performance of manual labours, such as carpentry, boat-building, and the works of

agriculture. The chiefs in Homer prepare their own meals; the princesses weave and spin, fetch water from the fountain, and assist in the washing of garments by the river-side. In those remote ages, the position of women was marked by a simple dignity which it afterwards lost. The wife, though to some extent purchased by her husband, who made valuable presents to her parents, was treated with great respect, and young unmarried women, though occasionally mingling with youths at festivals and religious processions, and sometimes performing offices about the chiefs which to us seem very extraordinary, were for the most part closely guarded against contamination. The feasts of the early Hellenes, distinguished as they were by much joyousness, were always decent and temperate. The dishes, while sufficiently varied to give an agreeable relish, were not very numerous. Wine was largely diluted with water, and a libation to the gods was poured upon the ground before any of the revellers drank. At these banquets, the bards sang or recited poems of a martial or religious strain; feats of strength and agility were performed by the heroes; and the youths sometimes executed dances marked by the stern modulation of clashing arms and meeting shields.



GREEK WARRIOR ARMED WITH SPEAR AND SHIELD.

Hospitality was one of the virtues of the ancient Greeks, as it is of most primitive communities, where men are open and free, alike in their friendship and their hate, and where the necessities of existence can hardly be met unless in a spirit of mutual generosity. Every Greek considered himself under a sacred obligation to succour a stranger who presented himself at his gates; and not until he had been refreshed with food was it permissible to ask any questions as to whence he had come, or where he was going, what was his name, or what his history. The fugitive who appeared as a suppliant was regarded as having a claim of peculiar sanctity, although to acknowledge it would often expose the benefactor to the wrath of the fugitive's enemy. A belief that the gods occasionally visited the cities of men in disguise may have had something to do with this readiness to assist the wayfarer; but let us rather believe that natural kindness supplied the principal motive. Even the poor observed these laws of hospitality, as well as the rich; for to act otherwise was considered disgraceful and impious, and it was believed that the Divine Powers would severely punish all such transgressions. Consideration for inferiors was



PARIS SHOOTING WITH A BOW.
From a Painting on a Vase of the Combat over the Body of Patroclus.

another amiable quality among the primitive Greeks; but it was expected of the inferiors that they should prove their title to indulgent treatment by fidelity and self-respect.

Architecture, in the time of Homer, was still in a rudimentary condition; nevertheless, it had produced some striking results, in which massiveness began to assume the forms of a beauty as yet imperfectly developed. The useful arts were not unknown nor neglected. The people of Orchomenos, a town of Bœotia, distinguished themselves by constructing two large tunnels to assist in carrying off the waters of Lake Copais, which was not sufficiently drained by its natural outlets. One of the tunnels runs through a neighbouring mountain for a distance of about four English miles, and is pierced by some twenty shafts of considerable height, which are now choked up. These conduits are generally believed to be among the oldest works in Greece, though it has sometimes been questioned whether they are not mainly of natural formation. By the time of Alexander the Great they had become stopped with rubbish, but were then partially cleared out. The sensitiveness of the Hellene to all forms of beauty was combined with a strong genius for the practical. Great respect was shown to artificers, and the carpenter was supposed to be under the special patronage of Athene, the Greek Minerva. His craft was regarded as conferring a sort of nobility, and he himself was ranked with the soothsayer, the bard, and the physician. Statuary was apparently not unknown in the time of the Heroes, but it was doubtless in a rude and primitive stage. At a still earlier date, antecedent to the supposed period of the Trojan War, the Greeks, indeed, worshipped unshaped masses of stone, or beams of wood, to which a sacred and symbolical value was attached. But in time these gave place to figures of more or less truth and refinement, and the art of sculpture, in which the Greeks were ultimately to excel all other races, took its origin from the services of the temples. Inquirers are of opinion that the Egyptian colonists introduced the use of images into religious worship, and it is certain that the first development of Hellenic sculpture had something of an Egyptian character. But the whole subject is involved in much obscurity.

The painting of pictures is not alluded to by Homer; yet it would seem that the art of design was known to his contemporaries, for we read of garments woven with representations of battle-scenes and incidents of the chase. Considerable ingenuity was shown in the fabrication of armour and of weapons, which were sometimes wrought of iron, but more frequently of bronze. Homer's elaborate description of the shield of Achilles, with its multitudinous figures in relief, shows that utility, even in that distant age, was combined with a high regard for ornamentation. We are not, of course, to take this account of the hero's shield in a literal sense; but we may reasonably infer that some such works, though probably of an inferior magnificence, were known to the poet. The Carian and Mæonian women distinguished themselves in the art of colouring ivory; and the making of woven stuffs, from which robes and other dresses were fashioned, appears to have been carried to a pitch of marked excellence. Literature, with the early Greeks, was entirely confined to poetry, and it is doubtful, as we have before observed, whether writing was understood in those days. That the Greeks derived their alphabet from the Phœnicians, is now very generally allowed; but it is by no means certain at what date the knowledge was introduced. Herodotus says that the Phœnician Cadmus and his companions taught the use of letters, together with other branches of science, to the semi-barbarian Greeks of that period, who at first simply copied the forms they had received. Afterwards those forms were largely changed, and at some undefined epoch the Greeks must have reversed the Eastern practice of writing from right to left. Even as late as the time of Herodotus, the Ionians called their books by the name of parchments, because the skin of animals was the material on which the Phœnician colonists had written, although in the fifth century B.C. this had been superseded by the Egyptian papyrus. Three inscriptions in verse are quoted by Herodotus, who relates that he had himself seen them engraved on certain tripods in a temple at Thebes; and he terms the character Cadmean, which of course is the same as Phœnician.* Testimony of this nature is not conclusive; but it has its value, and it points, together with other evidence, to the belief that the Greek alphabet, however much it may have been altered in process of time, had a Phœnician origin.

Commerce did not exist to any great extent among the early Greeks. The chief trading community of those days was that of Phœnicia, the people of which country bartered their commodities with the Hellenes, though in a way which seems to imply much greater enterprise on their part than on that of their European customers. The Greeks had galleys of fifty oars; but, as a rule, they do not appear to have ventured to any great distance,

* Herodotus, V. 58—61.

and it was the Phœnicians who brought merchandise to them, rather than they who sought it of the Phœnicians. Coined money was as yet unknown to the Hellenes, so that all these transactions must have been conducted upon the principle of exchange. The Greeks of the heroic age were not very expert or adventurous seamen. Long voyages may have been occasionally performed; but, for the most part, the Greek sailors of Homer's time crept along the shores, or crossed from one headland to another, or pursued a devious but tolerably safe course from island to island among the groups that stud the waters of the Ægean. The vessels thus employed were simple in construction. The mast, which was planted in a socket, was usually removed at the end of the day, and the vessel was hauled up on the nearest beach during the hours of darkness, since a voyage by moonlight or starlight would have been dangerous in the event of clouds overspreading the sky. One consequence of this imperfect state of navigation is seen in Homer's ignorance of foreign countries. The Greek mainland, the Greek isles, and the Greek colonies of Asia Minor, the poet knew well; but beyond those limits he possessed scarcely any information, and it is probable that but few of his countrymen and contemporaries had any more. Homer seems hardly to have been aware of the very existence of Italy. Sicily was nothing more than a dim realm of fable. Egypt and Phœnicia were known much as the extreme east of Asia was known to the European nations of the Middle Ages. Of the northern and western regions of the world little was even conjectured, save that they were occupied by a dreadful waste of waters at the very limit of created things, and that somewhere in the west (an idea apparently borrowed from the Egyptians) lay the Elysian Fields, reserved for a few of the specially virtuous dead. The country of the pious, happy, and long-living Ethiopians, whom the gods themselves loved to visit, was supposed, at different periods of antiquity, to be in the east, the north, and the south; but these conceptions were vague and poetical, rather than exact and scientific. The all-sufficiency of the Greek stood in the way of his geographical knowledge. Yet, inasmuch as short distances seemed vast to him, it is probable that the world presented itself to his imagination with as much magnitude as it does to ours.

The astronomical ideas expressed by Homer show how little was then ascertained with reference to the physical structure of the universe. The earth was believed to be a plane, surrounded by a river called Oceanus, from which all other rivers, all springs and wells, and even all seas, derived their waters, and on the farther shores of which were the shadowy regions of the dead. It was supposed that this earth-encircling river ebbed and flowed thrice in the course of a day, and that the heavenly bodies descended into it at their setting, and emerged from it when they arose on the following morning. The sky was represented as a solid vault, which Atlas supported on his shoulders; and the earth was regarded as the centre of the universe, which to the uninstructed senses it appears to be. The abode of the gods was sometimes described as occupying the summit of Mount Olympus (from which the earth was supposed to be suspended by a chain), sometimes as seated in the aërial regions above the world. At a remote and awful depth below the world was the infernal pit of Tartarus, where, within iron gates and brazen walls, Jove held in eternal torture those who had rebelled against his authority, and the souls of men exceptionally wicked. The stars and planets were observed with some degree of accuracy as to their relative positions, their groupings, and the periods of their rising and setting. The year was divided into months, and the length of the months was determined by the phases of the moon. As, however, the portions were thus of unequal duration, the Greeks found it necessary, at a very early period, to introduce an intercalary month whenever it was required to bring the seasons into harmony with the appointed festivals of religion.

Such, briefly narrated, was the state of Grecian politics, society, art, and science, at the time of Homer, whose century was most probably the ninth before the Christian era, though, as before observed, the point is doubtful. Of few other people, at a primitive stage in their development, do we possess so minute and authentic an account. Yet, when we turn from general conditions to specific events, we are surrounded by obscurity. Assuming the Trojan War to have had a basis of fact, it is very conceivable that the prolonged absence from Greece of so many kings and chieftains may have resulted in a state of anarchy, in numerous internal changes, and in some displacement of populations. Whether or not this was the immediate effect of the expedition, is uncertain; for, during a period of nearly sixty years after the date usually assigned to the fall of Troy (viz., 1184 B.C.), nothing is recorded of what was going on in Greece. But at length that section of the Greek race called the Thessalians migrated from Epirus, their earlier home, into the more eastern region afterwards called by their own name. They came from Thesprotia, a district

of Epirus which had long been a seat of the Pelasgians; and it is therefore probable that they were of Pelasgian origin, though an Illyrian parentage has also been suggested. Their progress was energetically resisted by the Achæans and other tribes; but the Bœotians, who at that time held the territory of Æolis, speedily gave way before the invasion, and, quitting the country, with the exception of a few serfs, entered the land subsequently known as Bœotia, but then called Cadmeis (from Cadmus), where, after a difficult struggle, they drove out the ancient inhabitants, and established their own predominance.

This removal of the Bœotians is thought to have taken place in 1124 B.C. It would seem, therefore, that the incursion of the Thessalians into the territory which they adopted as their own, and to which they gave their name, must have been a little earlier; but all these dates are questionable in the highest degree. Of the displaced population of Cadmeis, some found a temporary refuge in Laconia; others settled at Athens; and many were scattered in the adjacent islands, and along the coasts of the Peloponnesus. It is alleged by some ancient writers that both the Thessalians and the Bœotians, in entering the countries subsequently called after them, were simply returning to their original territories, from which, at an earlier time, they had been dispossessed. But the fact is uncertain, and may have been invented to give a show of right to what would otherwise have rested on mere force.

The movement of the Bœotians was followed by a great migration of the Dorians from their seats on the northern side of Mount Parnassus into the Peloponnesus. The latter event is placed by Thucydides twenty years after the former, viz., in 1104 B.C. It is doubtful, however, whether the Dorian conquest of the Peloponnesus was not considerably later even than the time of Homer, who gives no indication of the presence of Dorian tribes in the south-western parts of Greece. We hear scarcely anything of the Dorians in the very early ages of Greek history; but they appear to have frequently changed the place of their abiding, and it is not unlikely that the small mountainous territory of Doris, situated between Locris and Phocis, with Thessaly immediately to the north, may have formed only a portion of their original domain. The shifting of the Thessalian and Bœotian tribes may have resulted in a serious loss of territory to the Dorians, who were thus compelled to look for indemnity elsewhere. The mythical account of their movement connects it with the descendants of Hercules. According to this story, the children of that semi-divine being were persecuted by Eurystheus, King of Argos and Mycenæ, who, out of jealousy of Hercules, had imposed on him the prosecution of his twelve labours. The posterity of the hero took refuge in Attica, and thence carried on war against Eurystheus, whom they ultimately slew. Having thus rid themselves of an implacable enemy, they resumed possession of the Peloponnesus, to which they had an hereditary claim. A pestilence, considered by them to have been specially sent by heaven upon the land, again compelled them to seek a home in Attica; but in the course of a few years they were encouraged by an ambiguous oracle to set their faces once more towards the Isthmus of Corinth, in the hope that they might finally enjoy the dominions which they conceived to be theirs by right. At the entrance to the Peloponnesus, however, they were met by the united forces of the Achæans, Ionians, and Arcadians. Hyllus, the eldest son of Hercules, fell in single combat with Echemus, King of Tegea, and the Heraclidæ, as the descendants of Hercules are called,* were obliged to enter into an agreement by which they undertook to abandon their enterprise for a hundred years. Both the son and the grandson of Hyllus attempted to enter the Peloponnesus in contravention of this agreement, but without success; and it was not until after the second of these disastrous enterprises that the true meaning of the oracle was explained.

The people had been told that they should have a fortunate passage over the Isthmus of Corinth when they had reaped the third harvest after their second entry into Attica. This was understood in the sense of the third year; but it now appeared that what was really intended was the third generation. When that period had arrived, the Heraclidæ were directed to return; but, instead of proceeding by the isthmus, which, as before, was defended by a powerful army, they were to cross the Gulf of Corinth near its western extremity, where the channel between the two shores is exceedingly narrow. They accordingly passed the straits, together with large numbers of Dorians, Ætolians, and Locrians, from the northern side of the gulf; marched quietly through the territories of the Ionians and Arcadians; and, defeating the Achæans of the south and east, seized upon the largest portion of the Peloponnesus, and divided it amongst themselves. This is the event which is known in ancient history as the Return of the Heraclidæ. The Dorians are said

* From Heracles, the Greek form of the name Hercules.

to have joined the expedition because of the aid which Hercules had rendered the Dorian king Ægimius in his contests with the Lapithæ. Tisamenus, son of Orestes, who until the period of the conquest had been the most powerful monarch in the Peloponnesus, retired with a portion of his Achæan subjects to a part of the northern coast then occupied by the Ionians. The latter, being conquered by the Achæans, withdrew, first to Attica, and then to Asia Minor; and the country they abandoned took the name of Achaia from that time forth.

The conquest of the Peloponnesus by the Heraclidæ and their allies led to many important changes. The kingdom of Elis was given to Oxylus, an Ætolian chief, and it was agreed that two great grandsons of Hyllus—Temenus and Cresphontes—should, together with the infant sons of a younger brother, Aristodemus, who was now dead, draw lots for Argos, Messenia, and Sparta. The result was that Argos fell to Temenus, Messenia to Cresphontes, and Sparta to the twin sons of Aristodemus. Elis had until then been inhabited by a race called the Epeans, who now submitted to the Ætolians, after their king had been slain in single combat. The vanquished tribe appears to have been absorbed in the Ætolian invaders, for its name disappears from history after the date of these events. The descendants of Temenus acquired Argolis, Ægina, Sicyon, and Phlius. Messenia acknowledged the rule of Cresphontes without any attempt at resistance, and its king, Melanthus, withdrew to Attica with several of his people. The representatives of the infant sons of Aristodemus encountered some little difficulty in securing the country which chance had delivered into their hands. The inhabitants of Helos opposed so stubborn a front to the enemy that, upon being at length defeated, they were reduced to slavery, and became the ancestors of the degraded class called Helots. The other cities of the same territory accepted the sway of the strangers, and an Achæan named Philonomus, who aided this settlement by an act of treason, received for his reward the neighbouring town and territory of Amyclæ, which he had betrayed to the foe. Such, at least, is the account given by some of the Greek historians, though it is doubtful whether both Helos and Amyclæ did not preserve their independence until a much later period. Corinth was subjugated by the Dorians in the next generation to that of Temenus and Cresphontes, when the dynasty of the Sisyphids was expelled, together with many of the Æolians who had previously inhabited the city.

That the narration of these events transmitted to us from ancient times is not entirely false, may be readily granted; but it cannot be received in its fulness. The probability is that what is called the Dorian conquest of the Peloponnesus (though, as we have seen, the Dorians were not the only invaders) took place many years after the date usually assigned to it, and it is also likely that the subjugation of the peninsula spread over a very long period, and was not accomplished without much difficulty, and some temporary checks. If the Dorians and their allies were a warlike race, so also were the Achæans, and the latter possessed fortified cities of considerable strength. The invaders, it is true, were better armed, and possessed of a more elaborate discipline; but it is not likely that the issue was mainly determined in the open field, and such towns as Larissa, Tiryns, and Mycenæ, with their high and massive walls, must have detained the enemy for several years before they were finally reduced. It would seem that the Dorians proceeded by occupying strong posts in the neighbourhood of the Achæan cities, cutting off the supplies, and occasionally harassing their adversaries by sudden and unexpected incursions. A visible proof of this system of attack was still remaining in the time of Pausanias, who lived in the second Christian century, and who relates that, between three and four miles from Argos, on the western side of the gulf, was a hillock covered with buildings, among which was a monument of Temenus, which was yet honoured with religious rites by the Argolic Dorians. Temenus, according to Pausanias, had taken possession of this point during the struggle with the Achæans, had fortified the ground, and had made it his base of operations against the surrounding country. To what extent the Dorians were assisted in their conquest of the Peloponnesus by other Greek races, it is impossible to say. There is no reason why they should not have been accompanied by Ætolians and Locrians from the further side of the Gulf of Corinth; but the Heraclidæ, if we admit their existence at all, were Achæan princes, and modern historians are disposed to reject the statement that they led a motley array of adventurers against their own countrymen. The main fact of the whole narrative is, that in a remote but uncertain age the Dorians became the predominant race in that part of Greece which was called after the mythical king, Pelops. Their motive for representing themselves as allied with the Heraclidæ is not difficult to explain. They had no ancient history of their own, either real or mythical, of any importance, and it was therefore

very advantageous to them to claim a connection, even though of a distant and collateral nature, with the great hero Hercules, and thus with Agamemnon, and other illustrious chieftains of the Achæan stock. At the date of the Persian War, the Spartans actually laid claim to the command of all the Grecian forces, on the score of this assumed descent from the more ancient inhabitants of the peninsula.

While the Dorians were making progress in the Peloponnesus, the Bœotians were threatening Attica, within the northern borders of which they claimed some towns as belonging to their own territory. The Attic king, Thymœtes, showed timidity in opposing the Bœotian leader Xanthus, and the national cause was taken up with spirit by Melanthus, the former sovereign of Messenia, who, as already related, had sought refuge in the neighbourhood of Athens from the irruption of invaders who had deprived him of his own dominion. He slew Xanthus in a personal encounter, and was rewarded with the throne of Attica, which Thymœtes had disgraced by his want of manliness, and which now passed from the house of Erechtheus. The kingdom was transmitted by Melanthus to his son Codrus, at the latter end of whose reign a body of Dorians invaded Attica, and laid siege to Athens. The city was saved, if we may believe a popular legend, by an act of heroic self-devotion on the part of Codrus, who had by that time attained an advanced age. Aletes, the leader of the invasion, had been told by the Delphic oracle that he would assuredly succeed if he spared the life of the Athenian king; but his good fortune depended upon that condition. The reply of the oracle coming to the knowledge of Codrus, he disguised himself in a woodman's dress, went forth from the gate, and, encountering two Dorians, killed one with his axe. Immediately afterwards, he was himself slain by the other; and when the Athenians sent a herald to claim the body of their king, the Dorians, believing that the gods had declared against them, withdrew their forces from Attica. The story is characterised by so high a moral grandeur that one could wish it to be true; but it is unfortunately open to some doubt. Pausanias gives a very different narrative, which is to the effect that some of the Dorians burst by night into the city, were surrounded by the Athenians, and, taking refuge round the altars of the Eumenides on the Areopagus, were spared out of considerations of religion. In either case, the attack on Athens was defeated; but the territory of Megara, lying at the eastern extremity of the Isthmus of Corinth, was separated from Attica, to which it had for a short time belonged, and occupied by a Dorian colony, to which Corinth was the parent city.

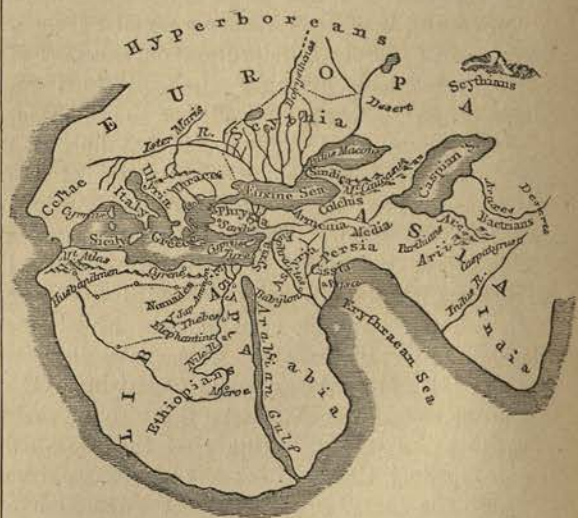
Among other effects of the Dorian conquests was the formation of several Greek colonies in Asia Minor. These settlements, however, appear not to have been made simultaneously, as the ancient legend would induce one to suppose, but from time to time during a course of many years. The Achæan populations, dislodged from the Peloponnesus by the victorious advance of the Dorians, may in many instances have crossed the Ægean to those eastern shores which were not far distant, and which were associated with the heroic legend of Troy. But the Hellenic colonies in Asia Minor were due more to other divisions of the Greek race than to the Achæans. A general displacement seems to have resulted from the long series of warlike incursions beginning with that of the Thessalians into the province called after them, and ending with that of the Dorians into the south-western peninsula. Attica, as we have seen, gave a generous reception to many of the fugitives; but so small a territory could not long accommodate so large an accession to its numbers, and emigration became a necessity. Bodies of colonisers were accordingly organised under the sons of Codrus, and, while some of them settled in the Cyclades, others passed on to the shores of Asia. These adventurers are believed to have been preceded by an earlier band, whose exodus was a more direct result of the Dorian successes in the Peloponnesus. Several of the Achæans, on finding themselves dispossessed of their ancient homes, were led by their native princes into Bœotia, where they were joined by many of the original inhabitants of that country, together with some of its Æolic conquerors, from whom the ensuing movement towards Asia Minor is often called the Æolic emigration, and occasionally the Bœotian. It will thus be seen that the emigrants were made up from several distinct tribes; but all were under the direction of the Achæan princes. Embarking at the port of Aulis, on the Euripus, whence the expedition against Troy is reported to have set forth, the wanderers occupied the island of Lesbos, on the coast of Asia Minor, where they founded six cities. A detachment then passed over to the opposite coast, and spread in time from the foot of Mount Ida to the mouth of the river Hermus. At one time, indeed, they extended beyond the Hermus, on the southern side of which they established the city of Smyrna; but this afterwards came into the hands of the Ionians. The Æolic towns on the mainland were eleven in number, or twelve

including Smyrna; but, with the exception of that famous place, Cyme was the only Æolic city of Asia Minor which attained to any importance.

THE WORLD ACCORDING TO HOMER.

The movement proceeding from Attica is called the Ionic migration, because some of the emigrants were Ionians from the north of the Peloponnesus, who had been driven out by the Achæans from the south and east of that peninsula when they themselves were dispossessed by the Dorians. These Ionians, however, formed only a minority of the total number. Greeks from many other parts of the country, who in the general turmoil had found refuge and hospitable treatment in Attica, but who could not permanently exist in that mountainous and contracted land, joined the emigration to the east, and, settling between the Hermus and the Mæander, established twelve cities (afterwards augmented by Smyrna) which subsequently ranked among the most famous of the Hellenic world. The neighbouring islands of Chios and Samos were also included in their Asiatic possessions, and the twelve independent States which in later times were established in that region went by the general name of Ionia, although the population was derived more from other Greek races than from the Ionic tribes. The various cities, however, were bound together by the great Pan-Ionic festival (that is, the festival of all the Ionians), which was held in honour of Poseidon, or Neptune. The Æolic colonies were similarly grouped under the name of Æolis; and to the south of Ionia were other settlements of Greek descent, which were known by the appellation of Doris, because the new-comers were mainly of Doric origin. These Doric possessions in Asia Minor comprised the islands of Rhodes and Cos, together with a small territory on the mainland. The number of the Doric colonies was six, and we accordingly read of the Doric Hexapolis, for the Greeks reckoned everything by cities. Their great religious festival was that of Apollo Triopius, which was celebrated at Triope, and to which only the inhabitants of the six cities, as genuine Dorians, were admitted.

The migration of the Ionian colonies from Greece is stated to have occurred in 1044 B.C. The Æolian and Doric settlements were respectively earlier and later; but, as the date just given is open to the gravest doubt, the whole series of migrations must be excluded from the compass of exact chronology. The Greek States of Asia Minor will frequently appear in subsequent pages; but for the present we must take leave of them, with the remark that, conspicuous and interesting as their history is, as we shall shortly have occasion to set forth, they did not occupy any very large territory, nor extend many miles eastward from the Ægean coast.



THE WORLD ACCORDING TO HERODOTUS.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE DAWN OF THE HISTORIC AGE IN GREECE.

Colonisation of Calliste, or Thera, by Cadmeans and Minyans—Dorians in Ægina—Greek Settlements in Crete—Outline of the Cretan Institutions—The Syssitia, or Public Meals—Education of the Cretan Youths—Effect of Greek Training on the National Character—The Achæans, Æolians, Dorians, and Ionians: Changes in their Mutual Positions—Language, Religion, and Manners, the Bond of Union among the Greek States—The Amphictyonic Council—The Olympic Games: the Olympiad as a Chronological System—Character and Influence of the Games—The Pythian, Nemean, and Isthmian Games—Popularity of those Festivals—The Delphic and other Oracles—Absence of Federal Union among the Greeks—Political Changes in the Constitution of the Grecian States.

THE migrations of the Thessalians, Bœotians, Dorians, and other Greek races, described in the foregoing Chapter, were followed, or accompanied, by several minor shiftings of the population, which were not without their effect in creating the Hellas of more historic times. The island of the Ægean

EXCAVATIONS AT OLYMPIA.

originally called Calliste, and afterwards Thera, was peopled by a colony of Cadmeans, the earlier inhabitants of Bœotia. This colony was headed by a prince named Theras, who gave his name to the island, and who is said to have been joined by a band of Minyans, the posterity of the Argonauts, whose distinctive title was derived from Minyas, one of their ancient kings. If we go back to very primitive times, we find the Minyans seated in Thessaly and Bœotia; but those who accompanied Theras had been driven out of Lemnos by the Pelasgians. In the first instance they had gone to Laconia, in the Peloponnesus, where they were hospitably received by the Spartans; but, having claimed a share in the succession to the throne, on the ground that some of the Argonauts, their ancestors, had come from that part of Greece, the people determined to put them to death. From this peril they were delivered by their Spartan wives, who obtained admission to the prison in order to bid them farewell, and, by exchanging dresses, facilitated their escape. Theras was preparing to embark for Calliste when the Minyans arrived at the heights of Taygetus, near the shores of the Messenian Gulf. Some of them settled in that division of the Peloponnesus, which was thenceforward called Triphylia, and which is situated about the middle of the western coast: here they expelled the Caucones and other tribes, and founded six cities, which existed as independent States. The rest went with Theras to the island which he had resolved to seize.

Another of the Greek islands received an accession to its population about the same time. Ægina is a small, mountainous territory in the middle of the Saronic Gulf, between Argolis and

Attica. In the mythical ages, it was ruled by Æacus, king of the Myrmidons, from whom Achilles was descended, together with other illustrious heroes; but the Myrmidons are a people of so shadowy and fabulous a character that the learned are not agreed as to the meaning of their name. The island appears to have been at first the seat of an Æolian race; but, at the epoch which is associated with the Return of the Heraclidæ, a Dorian colony was conducted thither, by a chief named Triaco, from the city of Epidaurus, which, standing upon the eastern coast of Argolis, fronted towards Ægina at a distance of a few miles. The Dorian settlers were not very numerous, and, instead of expelling the natives—a task for which they were apparently not strong enough—they mingled with them on equal terms, and soon acquired an influence so great as to enable them to introduce their own language, manners, and institutions into the island. The mixture of Æolian and Doric blood in the population of Ægina produced an energetic and gifted race, which in after times conferred upon this small spot of ground a brilliant though a short-lived history. We shall have occasion further on to describe its commercial prosperity, its powerful navy, the success with which its people cultivated a rocky and sterile soil, their skill in the arts, and their contest with the Athenians. For the present, we have simply to record the processes by which the Æginetan population was built up.

The most important of the insular migrations of the Greeks at this period of their history was that by which Crete was peopled by bodies of settlers from the Peloponnesus. This was in the third generation after the Doric conquest of the southern peninsula; but there would seem to have been Greek settlements in the island at a still earlier date. Of these, however, but little is known, and we therefore confine ourselves to the later emigrations. According to the very doubtful chronology which is the best we have, two expeditions set forth from the Peloponnesus for Crete about the year 1044 B.C.—the supposed date of the Ionian movement to Asia Minor. One body of adventurers proceeded from Laconia; the other was from Argolis. The former consisted chiefly of Minyans who, after having dwelt for a time at Amyclæ, revolted against the Dorians, and set out in search of a new home, together with many Doric Spartans; though some accounts state that the principal colonisers were Pelasgians. Whoever the settlers were, they appear to have left a portion of their number in the isle of Melos, and then to have descended on Crete. The expedition from Argolis consisted of Dorians led by the Argive prince, Althæmenes, who conducted a section of his followers to Rhodes (where he himself remained), and left the others in the larger island which was associated with the legendary history of the infant years of Jupiter. These Greek colonisers found Crete in a half-depopulated condition, divided into a number of petty kingdoms, with no community of origin or identity of interests, and possessing little power of resistance to an energetic foe. Tradition spoke of a plague and famine which, after the Trojan war, had desolated the island; and it is not improbable that there had been a decline from a former state of prosperity. At any rate, the natives submitted to the new-comers without any extreme contention, and Crete thenceforward received a character which was mainly Greek.

Of the so-called institutions of Minos, which made Crete famous in the ancient world, we have a very minute description in the "Politics" of Aristotle, in the writings of Strabo, and in other Greek authors. Whether those institutions are really attributable to Minos, or can even be referred to a time anterior to the Spartan and Dorian colonies, is a doubtful matter. Unquestionably, a similarity exists between the laws of Minos and the laws of Lycurgus; but if there were some among the Greeks who believed that the usages of the Spartans were derived from Crete, there were others who maintained that the usages of the Cretans were derived from Sparta. The latter seems the more probable opinion. Minos is to a great extent a mythological person, and it is somewhat unlikely that at so early a date as the fifteenth century before the Christian era, with which he is usually connected (and some have placed him even higher), so elaborate a system of laws should have been laid down. We shall therefore, perhaps, be forming the safest conclusion if we assume that the Cretan and the Spartan laws both arose in Laconia, although some divergences may have supervened in the course of ages; that the Spartan code was revised by Lycurgus; and that after a time the institutions of Crete were connected with the name of Minos, as a means of giving them a greater local glory, and surrounding their provisions with the halo of a divine and mysterious origin.

The people of Crete were divided into three classes — freemen, slaves, and a body standing between the two, who, while they enjoyed no great privileges, were elevated above the condition of absolute serfdom. The last-named were apparently the descendants of those earlier inhabitants of the island who had been subdued by the settlers from

the Peloponnesus. They dwelt in villages, and cultivated the fields: the cities knew them not, and they were regarded as an inferior race. For the possession of their lands, they had to pay a tribute from which the upper class was exempt; but no restriction was laid upon their industry, nor did they suffer from cruel oppressions, being even permitted the enjoyment of many of their old national customs. The slaves were the posterity of tribes who had occupied the same position before the conquest, and of others, formerly freemen, who had irritated the successful colonists by a prolonged and obstinate resistance. These people were mere bondsmen to their lords, and were engaged either in works of husbandry, or in various menial services within the cities. The lands tilled by slave-labour were assigned partly to individuals of the dominant class, and partly to the State itself, which derived a portion of its revenue from such domains. Slaves might be sold, but were not to be taken out of the island. Some of these unfortunate beings, though probably only a few, were imported from abroad; but it is not clear that they were treated differently from the others. In the very ancient city of Cydonia, on the north-western shores of Crete, a singular custom prevailed, in which the practices of the Saturnalia appear to have been carried to the most extravagant lengths. The slaves in Cydonia were allowed certain holidays, during which they were left in command of the town, and might even drive out their masters with the whip, if they refused to wait at table. The Saturnalia of Rome were characterised by the same reversal of the ordinary relations of master and servant, though in a less extreme degree. They were instituted in commemoration of the freedom and equality which prevailed on earth during the golden days of Saturn, and may perhaps have operated at first as some slight corrective of the injustice of human bondage; but the inevitable tendency of the observance was towards riot and debauchery, and it ultimately degenerated into a nuisance and a public scandal.

The communities established in Crete by the Greek settlers appear to have all taken a republican form. At the head of each was a body of magistrates, ten in number, elected by the whole of the freemen, which of course excluded the cultivators of the soil, no less than the slaves. These magistrates were chosen out of certain privileged families, and, although they held office no longer than a year, were permitted, at the end of that time, if they had given evidence of capacity and worth, to offer themselves as candidates for vacancies which had occurred in the Senate, or Council of Elders—a body probably consisting of not more than thirty members, who were elected by the people, and invested with legislative and judicial functions for the remainder of their lives. The duties of the magistrates were to command in time of war, to represent the State in its relations with other countries, and to deliberate on its general interests. The members of the Senate assisted in the councils of the magistrates, regulated the internal affairs of the commonwealth, and, it would appear, administered both the civil and the criminal law. It will thus be seen that, although the government of the Cretan communities was republican in form, it had very little that was democratical in character. The suffrage was confined to the descendants of the conquering races, who were few in comparison with the mass of the population. In short, the citizens formed a species of aristocracy, to whom the country people were subservient. The republics of antiquity were often constructed on this pattern, which has sometimes been imitated in the modern world. Such governments are the creatures of privilege, and use the methods of freedom for the subjection of the larger number.

Whenever the magistrates (acting, it would seem, with the co-operation of the senators) had decided on any measure, they called together the general body of the citizens; but no right of discussion belonged to these freemen, and it is doubtful whether they had any power to reject what was laid before them, but were not rather summoned to receive notice of the contemplated act. The assembly, in fact, was similar to the Agora of the continental Greek monarchies, which merely registered the decrees of the king. Military habits were encouraged in the mass of the people, and community of feeling was promoted by the institution of the Syssitia, or public meals, in which all the citizens, without any distinction of rank or age, took part. Aristotle says that this custom existed among the Œnotrians of the south of Italy before it was known to the Greeks. However this may have been, the practice was undoubtedly very ancient, and it is possible that the Greek settlers in Crete found it already in force among the native populations. The expense of these meals was, in most of the Cretan cities, defrayed out of the public revenues; but at Lyctus every citizen devoted a tenth part of the produce of his own lands to the common table. The men who thus ate together were divided into companies, the individual members of which were associated by some similarity of ideas or pursuits. A woman managed the entertainment, and separate provision

was made for the females of the family. Two tables were set apart for strangers, who were hospitably lodged in a hall provided for that purpose in each city. Frugality and temperance were observed at the public banquets of the people, and the conversations which followed turned upon affairs of state, the deeds of heroes, and the sayings of the wise.

The Cretans placed a very high value on the Syssitia, and it is quite conceivable that the institution was productive of some good results. It fostered sentiments of friendliness among those who met one another in a genial and unceremonious manner, and it appears to have had an effect in promoting the education of the young. Up to eighteen years of age, the sons accompanied their fathers to the public hall in a way which marked their immaturity. Those who were very young waited at table; the older lads received a portion of plainer fare on a lower bench than the men, and were under the supervision of a public officer. Of book-knowledge, these youths had very little; but their physical training was such as to develop hardihood and courage. Humble and scanty garments left them equally exposed to the heat of summer and the cold of winter. It was part of their discipline to engage in frequent combats, regulated by the modulations of the flute and the lyre, when the blows given and received had more of reality than generally belongs to mimic battles. The greater portion of their time was passed in laborious exercises; but some degree of attention was also given to the study of poetry and music, which gave expression to the elements of the Greek religion, the principles of political life, and the heroic traditions of the race. On arriving at the age of manhood, each youth was obliged to choose a wife, with whom, however, he did not associate until both had attained maturer years.*

The effect of these customs was to sink the individual in the State, and to form a warlike and predominant body, capable of holding in subjection the unprivileged and disinherited masses of the country districts. For such a purpose, no system could have been better devised; but the purpose itself is questionable. In proportion as the institution of the Syssitia kept alive a feeling of brotherhood among all who were admitted to the observance, it marked and accentuated the difference between the citizens and the subject races, by maintaining an exclusive society, from which the others were shut out. The fruit of such regulations is certain to be manifested in an exaggeration of class pride, in animosities of race, and often in positive wrong-doing. There have undoubtedly been many worse tyrannies than the rule of the Cretan Greeks over the remnants of the earlier population; yet it had a character of injustice, which its better qualities must not persuade us to forget. To talk of republican freedom under such conditions, is to substitute rhetoric for facts. The majority of the people were disfranchised; a large number were enslaved. The ruling few had the virtues of courage, hardihood, simplicity, and orderliness; but they must have been more than human if they never used their opportunities for the undue repression of those whom the chances of war had delivered into their hands. The absorption of personal freedom in the organisation of the State—the loss of family life in the complications of the political machine—were other bad results of the Cretan institutions. We find the same things in the similar institutions of Sparta; and the cause was identical. In both localities, a conquered and despised race was to be kept in subjection by a perpetual exhibition of military strength, aptitude, and readiness. Where such is the fact, the predominant class becomes a kind of garrison, which is never able to lay down its arms. The development of the individual life must be sacrificed to the general safety of the governing body; and it is considered that enough has been done if the possessors of privilege are prepared at any moment to defend the citadel of their power.

No one, however, will pretend to deny that some of the most vivid and impressive characteristics of the Greek nature were fostered by this exclusiveness. It intensified, by concentration and contrast—by fellowship and antagonism—the peculiar disposition of that wonderful race; and it may perhaps have saved higher organisms from being debased by lower. We have now arrived at a period of Greek history when the qualities of the people appear more plainly than at earlier times; for we are passing out of the Mythical into the Historical Age. Between the Return of the Heraclidæ in 1104, which marks the termination of the former epoch, and the commencement of the Olympiads in 776 B.C., which is regarded as the starting-point of the latter, lies a period of three hundred and twenty-eight years, during which little is known beyond the migrations of the Greek races in Europe, in the islands, and in Asia. Even those migrations are involved in much obscurity, as the reader has seen; but it is clear, at any rate, that in distant and half-forgotten centuries a considerable change took place in the disposition of the various sections of the people. The Achæans

* Thirlwall's History of Greece, Vol. I., chap. 7.

and the Æolians were the dominant races of the country in those days which are associated with the Heroes and their kingdoms. The Dorians and the Ionians occupied a much lower position, being either numerically inferior, or less advanced in civilisation. But the important series of events following the irruption of the Thessalians into the country to which they gave their name, and the consequent removal of the Bœotians, effected a complete change in all these matters. At the dawn of the Historical Age, the Dorians were the principal members of the Greek family. They had established themselves both in Northern Greece and in the Peloponnesus, and had made their power felt in many directions. Originally occupying a small corner of the land to the south of Mount Œta, they now existed, in a greater or less degree, in most parts of the country. Their ascendency involved the depression of the Achæans — the typical Greek race of the Homeric poems. Along the northern shore of the Peloponnesus, twelve cities still perpetuated the fame of those ancient and historic tribes; but elsewhere they had been absorbed by their conquerors. The Æolians were equally superseded, and the Ionians were now predominant in Attica, in Eubœa, and in the southern islands of the Ægean, as well as in those middle settlements of Asia Minor which were called after their name. Throughout the Grecian world, the old Pelasgian element was by this time thoroughly mingled with the races which are generally termed Hellenic. The Greek nationality, as we understand it in the records of authentic history, had arisen out of the struggles of an earlier age.

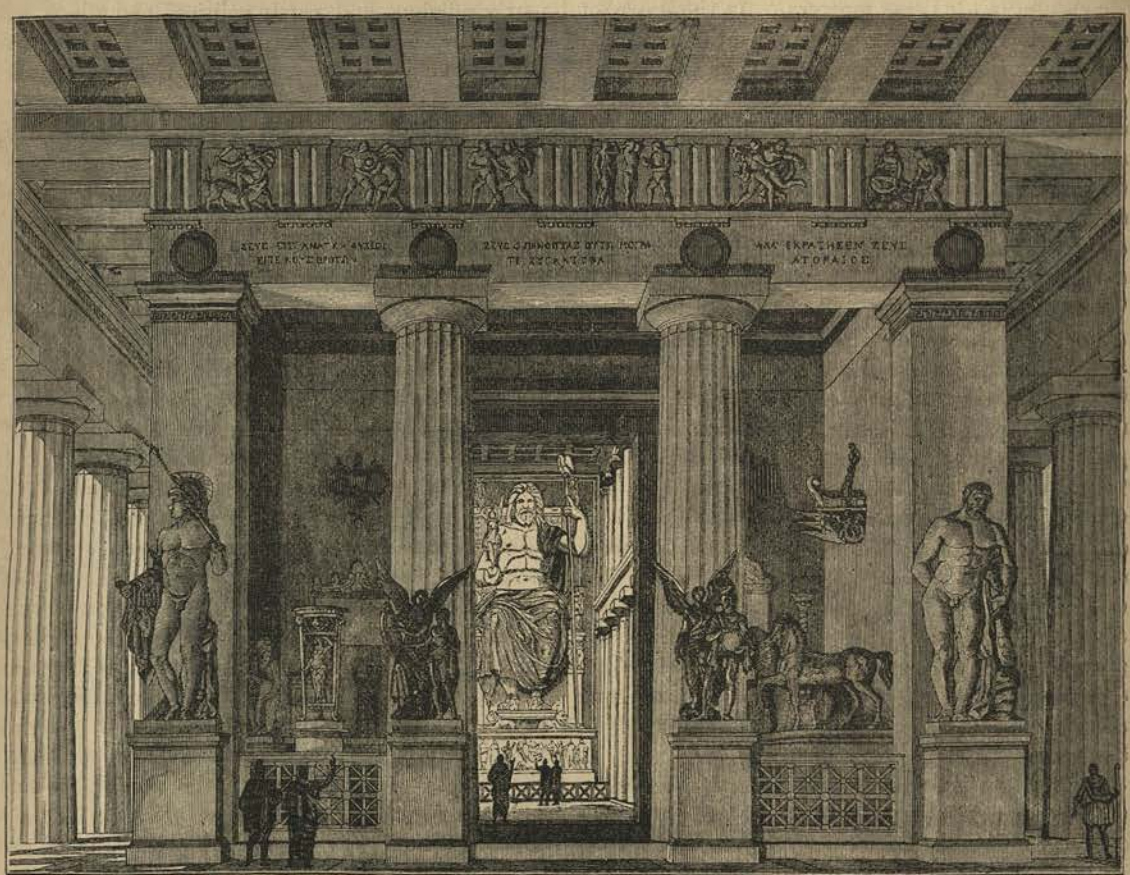
That nationality was divided into several independent communities; but a bond of union was found in the use of one language (broken, it is true, into several dialects, yet substantially the same), in the distinctive religion which belonged to all alike, and in the similarity of manners which prevailed in every part of the Hellenic world. To a Greek, all outside his own circle were barbarians —an expression, however, which did not at first imply absolute contempt, but only a strong sense of difference. This sense of difference had a natural effect in gathering to a yet more intense focus the consciousness of national life; and the poems of Homer, while providing all divisions of the race with a set of grand traditions, helped to fix the language by the prerogative of transcendant genius. But nothing, perhaps, kept the Greeks together so much as the religious system which they professed in common, and the unity of which was preserved, while its spirit was perpetually reanimated, by the sacred festivals and games held in various localities at short intervals of time. These meetings did not exist in the very earliest ages of Greek history; but the need of some such union came to be recognised as soon as the nation took definite form out of the chaos of primeval days.

The most celebrated of the religious assemblies was the Amphictyonic Council, which was, indeed, partly religious and partly political, and which on some occasions had an important influence on Grecian affairs. The name has been associated with the fabulous Athenian king, Amphictyon, a son of Deucalion and Pyrrha, who is said to have been the first to interpret dreams and draw omens; but it is probable that the word Amphictyones really denoted nothing more than neighbours, or dwellers around a certain spot. The Amphictyons, or members of this council, represented the twelve chief tribes or nations of Hellas, the names of which have been variously stated, but which were probably the Thessalians, Bœotians, Dorians, Ionians, Perrhæbians, Magnetes, Locrians, Œtæans, Achæans, Phocians, Dolopes, and Malians. The number of deputies varied at different times, and included two classes of representatives from each tribe; viz., a chief called Hieromnemon, and subordinates named Pylagoræ. It has been supposed, from the preponderance of northern tribes in this association, that the origin of the league should be referred to an early, though not the earliest, period; for the northern tribes were to a great extent of the old Pelasgian stock, from which some of the principal elements of the Greek religion were derived. Different writers have assigned, as the date of its beginning, the years 1498 and 1113 B.C.; but the first of these years is inadmissible. Nevertheless, the antiquity of some of the tribes, the names of which frequently occur before the historic period, but rarely afterwards, renders it probable that the Amphictyons formed their celebrated Council before the Dorian conquest of the Peloponnesus in 1104. We may therefore take 1113 B.C. as a not unlikely date, especially as it has the high authority of Mr. Fynes Clinton.* But perhaps the safest plan of all would be to admit that we are not in a position to speak with confidence on the point.

The several nations represented in the Amphictyonic Council enjoyed the most complete equality. Each seems to have had two votes, and two only, whatever the number of its deputies, which in the earlier ages was determined by the number of

* Fasti Hellenici.

sovereign States (such as Sparta and Athens) belonging to each parent nation (Doris, Ionia, &c.). Two sessions were held every year: the first in the spring, at Delphi; the second in the autumn, at Pylæ, otherwise called Thermopylæ. It was from the latter of these places that the deputies were entitled Pylagoræ; that is, councillors of the Pylæ—literally, "the gates," a term frequently applied by



TEMPLE AT OLYMPIA, RESTORED.

the Greeks to narrow passes. The Hieromnemons were persons whose business it was to attend to matters of religion. Special meetings were sometimes called, in addition to the regular sessions; but these were only on occasions of unusual importance. Æschines the orator has left us a particular account of the obligations to which the Amphictyons bound themselves by oath. "We will not," they swore, "destroy any Amphictyonic town, nor cut it off from running water in war or peace: if any one shall do so, we will march against him, and destroy his city. If any one shall plunder the property of the god" (the Delphic Apollo), "or shall be cognisant thereof, or shall take treacherous counsel against the things in his temple at Delphi, we will punish him with foot, and hand, and voice, and by every means in our power." Apollo, however, appears not to have been the divinity with whom the Amphictyonic meetings were originally associated. When these councils were first held, they were confined to Thessaly, and were sacred to Ceres. To the worship of Ceres, which took place at Thermopylæ, was afterwards joined that of the Delphic god, which gradually spread southwards, usurping to a great extent the honours formerly yielded to the daughter of Saturn and Ops. In process of time, the Amphictyons paid their regards principally to Apollo, whose oracle at Delphi was held in peculiar sanctity throughout all Greece.

The matters discussed at the meetings of these delegates were chiefly religious; but political affairs, affecting the interest of the whole Hellenic world, engaged a part of their attention. In early ages, the body discharged something of a federal office, and corrected in a slight degree the national tendency to separate into small and often jealous

THE DROMOS IN SPARTA, RESTORED.

communities. But after the rise of Sparta and Athens as the leading powers in Greece, the authority of the Amphictyonic Council very greatly diminished, and it was unable, in matters of State, to exercise a controlling influence. Its position in history will more particularly appear as we proceed. Although the principal of such bodies, the Amphictyonic Council was not the only association of its kind in Greece. The colonies of Asia Minor, belonging to the Æolian, Ionian, and Dorian nations, were bound together, as already shown, by religious federations; and we read also of a confederacy of seven States, whose council met in the temple of Neptune on the island of Calaurea, opposite the eastern coast of Argolis, to which Strabo even gave the title of Amphictyonic.

No less important were the Games which were held in various parts of Greece. Indeed, the more popular nature of these gatherings gave them in some respects a greater influence over the entire nation than any of the councils to which we have just referred. The chief festival was that celebrated at Olympia, on the banks of the Alpheus. The city of Olympia was in the State of Elis, in the Peloponnesus, and the games were held near an ancient temple of the Olympian Zeus, which afterwards contained a statue of the god by Phidias, in ivory and gold, of such gigantic size and exquisite workmanship that it was reckoned among the wonders of the world. The celebration took place every fifth year, and gave occasion for a series of athletic sports, and trials of physical skill and daring, which attracted an immense number of spectators. How this observance originated is not exactly known. From the very earliest ages, Olympia was a sacred spot, celebrated for an oracle of Zeus—otherwise Jupiter, or Zeus. But this was earlier than the institution of the Games, and it is very probable that the large concourse of persons seeking the shrine of the oracle may have originated the periodical celebration of sports having for their object the development of Greek manhood and supremacy. By popular tradition, the festivals were traced up to a divine parentage; but it was admitted that for a time they had fallen into neglect, from which they were rescued by Iphitus, King of Elis, and by Lycurgus, the Spartan legislator, in the year 776 B.C. That year was accordingly regarded by the Greeks as the First Olympiad; for these contests were used as a means of calculating dates. When, however, we consider the Olympiads with reference to the purposes of chronology, it is necessary to bear in mind that, although the Greeks spoke of these festivals as happening every fifth year, they did in fact take place at intervals of four years. Thus, the first Olympiad was in 776 B.C., the second in 772; which, counting both dates, made the latter the fifth year, although the interval was four years, or only a little more. The festivals were either in July or August, and it was from that season that the Hellenic year began. The whole of the intervening period between one celebration and the next was called an Olympiad; so that the mode of reckoning required the employment of such phrases as "the first year of the First Olympiad," "the second year of the First Olympiad," and so on; or, "the first year of the Second Olympiad," &c.

The Olympic Games were under the management of the Eleans, who chose the judges out of their own community. During the whole month in which they were celebrated, although the Games themselves lasted only five days, all hostilities were suspended throughout Greece, and to send an armed force into Elis at such a period was regarded as the highest sacrilege. The contests, while often trying the strength, endurance, and resolution of the combatants, were devoid of any ferocious character, the use of weapons being entirely excluded. They consisted for the most part of wrestling, boxing, running, jumping, and exercises with the quoit; there were likewise horse-races and chariot-races, besides contentions in poetry and music; and everything was so arranged—at least in the earlier ages—that all other considerations than the mere honour of victory were put aside. The prize was a simple garland of wild olive, cut from a tree in the sacred grove of Olympia, which was said to have been brought thither by Hercules; but the most distinguished of the Greeks regarded that prize as an honour beyond any other that could be won. The victors received extraordinary honours in their own State, and sometimes even substantial rewards, in the shape of exemption from taxes, or the payment of a sum of money. Persons from every part of Greece attended at the Olympic Games, and deputies from the various Hellenic States were officially present, usually taking with them a number of splendid offerings, which were devoted to the service of Zeus. Greece, disunited in many respects, became conscious of its unity on the banks of the Alpheus.

Even after the extinction of Greek freedom by the Romans, these festivals continued to be observed, and it was not until the year 394 of the Christian era that they were abolished by the Emperor Theodosius. They had doubtless degenerated much from their original excellence, and were entirely out of keeping with the Christian

faith, then predominant in the Roman world. Some writers have doubted whether their influence was entirely good, even in the best ages of Grecian history. Both Aristotle and Athenæus believed that the excessive devotion of young men to bodily exercises, which these Games encouraged, unfitted the combatants for the duties of citizens. That in many instances they tended to the development of physical vigour can hardly be questioned; but the extravagant honours paid to the victors seem likely to have had a bad effect on the characters of those who were their recipients. The statue of a successful combatant was erected in the sacred grove of Zeus at Olympia; a palm-branch was placed in his hand, as well as the crown of wild olive on his head; his name was proclaimed by a herald; and the acclamations of the populace contributed another element of intoxication to the hour of triumph. But even this was not all. On returning to his native city, the victor was escorted in a triumphal procession, not through the gates, but through a breach made in the walls. Banquets were given in his honour, and odes were sung in praise of his achievements. Thus, for winning a foot-race or a wrestling match, a young man received an amount of homage which could not have been surpassed had he been the greatest of statesmen or warriors—had he saved his country from ruin, or bestowed upon the world the finest works of poetry or art.

Inferior to the Olympic Games, yet still exercising an important influence over the general condition of Greece, were the Pythian, Nemean, and Isthmian Games. The Pythian festivals were held at Delphi in honour of Apollo, and were originally instituted by the Amphictyons in 585 B.C., after the destruction of Cirrha—a seaport near Delphi, the inhabitants of which were accused of levying exorbitant tolls on the pilgrims to the shrine of the god. The war waged by the Amphictyonic Council on this offending city lasted ten years; and when the place was at length conquered, every building was razed to the ground, and the whole territory consecrated to Apollo, a curse being imprecated on any one who should cultivate it. This is mentioned in history as the First Sacred War; and the spoils which fell into the hands of the victors, and which were of great value, owing to the prosperity of Cirrha as a place of commerce, were employed in founding the Pythian Games. Such, at least, is the account most generally accepted as to the origin of this festival; but other relations have been given, and the mythical story is that the Games were established by Apollo himself, after he had vanquished the serpent Python. The sports were celebrated every third Olympic year, under the superintendence of the Amphictyons. The Nemean Games derived their name from Nemea, a village in the northern part of Argolis, on the borders of the Corinthian territory. The god to whose honour they were dedicated was the Nemean Zeus, and they were celebrated once every two years under the presidency of the Corinthians, Argives, and Cleonæans—in later times, under that of the Argives only. In the popular belief, they were founded by Hercules as a thanksgiving to his father, Zeus, after the conquest of the Nemean lion. The Isthmian Games received their title from the Isthmus of Corinth, where they were celebrated in honour of Poseidon, the Greek Neptune. These festivals also occurred once in two years, and were considered so inviolable that the greatest public calamities were not permitted to set them aside. Thus, even after the destruction of Corinth by the Romans, in 146 B.C., the Isthmian Games were observed with their usual solemnity, and, as the Corinthians were then unable to conduct them, the duties of superintendence were confided to the people of Sicyon.

Taking all four of these festivals into view, one was celebrated every year, so that the various members of the Greek nationality had frequent opportunities of mingling, of comparing ideas, and of kindling anew the sentiment of brotherhood which is essential to every great race, but which the absence of any common government in Greece would otherwise have tended to destroy. No one was allowed to take part in the contests unless he could prove his Hellenic blood—a rule so rigidly enforced that when the kings of Macedon desired to distinguish themselves in this way, they were obliged first of all to satisfy the judges that they had some hereditary claim to be considered Greeks. Another advantage of the celebrations was that trade and commerce were promoted by the concentration in one spot of many thousand persons, drawn together from every part of the country. The festivals were fairs, as well as religious observances, and opportunities for the practice of competitive sports. Booths were set up round the sacred enclosure, and a vast amount of trafficking went on while the combatants were contending in the arena. A spacious hall was provided for the poets, philosophers, and historians, and the latest productions of literature were thus read to large audiences who, but for this method of publication, might never have had an opportunity of hearing such works. The highest and the lowest joined in the honourable struggles which were to

earn the much-coveted prize. Princes did not consider it beneath them to enter their names upon the lists, and the poorest citizen might equally take his part, for the simple reason that he too was a Greek.

The Oracles, as well as the Games, led to a commingling of Greeks from various and often widely-separated localities. The most ancient of the Oracles was that of Zeus at Dodona, where the sacred oaks, and the doves which inhabited them, were supposed in very early times to give prophetic responses. The Dodonæan Oracle was of Pelasgian origin, and belongs to the most primitive developments of the Greek religion. But the fame of this oracle was in later times eclipsed by that of Apollo at Delphi, which became by far the most celebrated in all Greece. The Grecian States applied to it for counsel in their difficulties, and it was sometimes consulted even by foreign nations. The shrine was served by a virgin priestess, who, when the oracle was consulted, seated herself on a tripod placed over a chasm in the centre of the temple. From this aperture a powerful vapour ascended, which had an influence on the brain of the priestess, and caused her to utter wild and fragmentary sentences, which from their very incoherence were supposed to bear a supernatural meaning. These responses, however, could not have been simply the result of untrained excitement, for it is said they were often delivered in hexameter verses. Nevertheless, there can be little doubt that the vapour possessed a peculiar and stimulating effect, which was sometimes so violent as to produce all the symptoms of madness. The accounts of this matter transmitted by ancient authors are very extraordinary, and, though possibly exaggerated, are not likely to have been wholly devoid of truth. On receiving the divine inspiration, the eyes of the priestess sparkled, her hair stood on end, and a shivering passed over all her body. Her utterances were often accompanied by loud and violent cries, and Plutarch mentions an instance of one of the priestesses being thrown into a state of such terrific excitement that the attendant priests, together with those who had consulted the oracle, rushed out of the temple in dismay.* The convulsive fit lasted for some days, and the priestess ultimately died of exhaustion. The answers given by the oracle were generally ambiguous and obscure, so as to be capable of any interpretation which the event might render necessary. Yet people believed in the authenticity of these responses, and the temple of Apollo at Delphi became one of the richest in the world, from the offerings deposited by worshippers who sought the guidance of the deity in all the important affairs of life.

Thus we see that, by means of periodical assemblies connected with religion, the Greeks preserved a unity of sentiment in the midst of many diversities of character and constitution. A Federal Union, based upon the fair and equal representation of all the States, might have done much towards preserving the liberties of the country from the iron grasp of Macedon and of Rome. But the political genius of the Greeks tended towards separation, and required a degree of local freedom which made all common government distasteful. The city was the unit of the national life, and it was a unit which did not admit of combination with others of the same kind. If at any time one city obtained a degree of predominance over another, it was regarded as tyranny. Athens, it is true, was the ruling power over the whole of Attica, which thus formed a single State; but this was contrary to the rule. We speak of various divisions of Greece, such as Thessaly, Bœotia, Phocis, Arcadia, Laconia, &c.; but these are merely geographical expressions, for within each of those countries were several independent cities. This mode of government led to a high degree of prosperity within the city itself, and its small portion of surrounding land; but it injured the prosperity of Greece considered as a whole. Petty antagonisms between city and city led to disastrous results, and finally laid Hellas at the feet of stronger and more concentrated Powers. The sentiment of mutual distrust spread from cities to individuals, and the suspicious nature of the Hellenes became a reproach to them in the eyes of other nationalities. A Greek belonging to one city was a foreigner in all others. He was not permitted to acquire property in land or houses, nor to contract marriage with a native woman, nor to sue in the courts of justice, except through the agency of a native citizen. The same exaggerated sentiment of civic patriotism was seen in the Italian republics of the Middle Ages, and it had the same results. Efficiency within a contracted sphere was neutralised by want of power in larger fields.

That no general confederacy of the Grecian States should ever have been formed is the more remarkable, because some such alliance had existed from an early period amongst a certain number of those States. The Achæan League, which acquired so distinguished a position in the later ages of Greek history, was an association of twelve cities

* Plutarch on the Cessation of Oracles, in the "Moralia."

on the southern shores of the Corinthian Gulf. Its principal object, when first established, was to promote various religious purposes; but we shall see as we advance that it acquired a much wider and more important character, that it drew to itself various commonwealths in other parts of Greece, and that it was thus enabled to present a formidable resistance to any common enemy. But the Achæan League was in the first instance simply local, and never at any time embraced the whole of Greece. The fact that it effected so much with such imperfect means, shows how secure might have been the position of Hellas had she learned at an early period to combine the perfection of individual liberty with the fulness and strength of national life. From time to time, some one city obtained a prevailing influence over the whole of Greece. Now it was Sparta, now Athens, now Thebes. But this temporary predominance did not amount to a true national union, and it was always resented by those whom it unwillingly controlled. Even the enormous danger to Greek independence arising from the invasion of Xerxes did not promote any universal combination of Greek States against the Persian monarch. Still, it led to a partial coalition of forces, and Mr. Grote has remarked that "the idea of a leadership or hegemony of collective Hellas, as a privilege necessarily vested in some one State, for common security against the barbarians, thus became current—an idea foreign to the mind of Solon, or any one of the same age."* None of the Grecian republics, however, proved itself capable of permanently wielding this leadership, and the union of Greece was not really accomplished until the whole of her component States were subjugated by the semi-barbarian from Macedonia.

Another historian of Greece † has observed that the mutual jealousy which prevented any kind of union was increased by the diversity in the forms of government arising in Greece at a very early period. In the condition of society represented by Homer, we find that the government of the various States was monarchical, although these were monarchies arising out of aristocratical bodies, and to some extent tempered by the aristocratical spirit. Subsequently to the Trojan War, however, monarchy appears to have gradually lost its hold over the people, and ultimately to have been superseded by republican forms, in which for several ages the nobles were predominant. A long period of change, migration, and internecine war set in after the return of the Heroes from their great expedition against Ilium. The Thessalian, Bœotian, and Dorian movements, of which the reader has already been informed, led to an entire revolution of the Greek nationality; and modes of government which in more primitive times had answered all purposes were now discredited by their failure to maintain a state of peace within the various districts of the peninsula. The Greece of history had arisen out of the Greece of legend, and new political ideas resulted from the new social condition which had been caused by a long succession of contests. The restless element in the Greek nature appears to have been quickened and intensified by these movements. Hereditary monarchy was too fixed and unalterable a condition to harmonise with the mobile and vivacious temperament of the Hellenic people; and a mode of rule which, while it excluded the commonalty from any share of power, gratified the true Greek love of change and jealousy of centralised authority, recommended itself, though not simultaneously, to the several branches of the race. The transformation of monarchical into republican and aristocratical governments was seldom accomplished by violence, but was usually the consequence of a series of modifications, trifling in themselves, but tending in the aggregate to alter the political character of the State. First, the power of the king would be shared by some others; then, the office would cease to be hereditary; next, the election for life would be changed into election for a comparatively brief term; finally, the very name of king would disappear, and the ruler of the country was simply its chief magistrate. The territorial possessions of the nobles, and perhaps also their superior culture, enabled them to seize upon the helm, to the exclusion of humbler men; and thus arose that species of government which, republican in form, but aristocratical in essence, gave its most distinctive character to Grecian history in the earlier portion of the historic ages.

* Grote: Part II., chap. 3.
† Thirlwall: Vol. I., chap. 10.

CHAPTER XXVI.

LYCURGUS AND THE EARLY HISTORY OF SPARTA.

State of the Peloponnesus in the Primitive Historic Ages—Argos and the Argive Confederation—Reign of Phidon—Rise of Sparta, or Lacedæmon—Pedigree of Lycurgus—His Travels, and Introduction of a New Code of Laws—Government and Social State of Sparta—Outline of the Spartan Laws—Position of Women in Sparta—General Character of the Spartan System—Division of the Land—Trade and Coinage—Minor Ordinances of Lycurgus—Favourable Position of Sparta for Defence—Subjugation of Laconia by the Spartans—First Messenian War—Second Messenian War—Heroic Exploits of Aristomenes—Arcadia Attacked—Reduction of Tegea—Rivalry between Sparta and Argos—Contest for the Possession of Cynuria—Alliance between Sparta and Lydia in the Time of Crœsus—Failure of the Spartan Government in all but Military Achievements.

In the early ages of authentic history it is to the Peloponnesus, rather than to other parts of Greece, that our attention is first directed. This peninsula had in still earlier times been the seat of the great Achæan sovereignties, and it still retained pre-eminence, although the Achæans had now been driven into a narrow strip of land on the northern coast. During the semi-fabulous era, Argos was the first Achæan community,—Lacedæmon, the second. Even after the internal revolution, they continued for awhile to occupy the same position; but the population had by that time become largely Dorian. At the period we have now reached, Argos was at the head of a confederation of Doric cities in the north-eastern parts of the Peloponnesus—a confederation which included the adjacent island of Ægina. The greater number of the cities forming this league are supposed to have been colonised from Argos; and they were bound together by the common worship of the Pythian Apollo, whose chief sanctuary was on the Argive Acropolis.

About 747 B.C. Argos was governed by a king named Phidon, who, not contented with the degree of power which the laws allowed him, established a despotism. The authority of Argos over the confederated cities had been greatly weakened before this time; but it was restored by Phidon, who then attacked Corinth, and brought it under his dominion. He appears to have aimed at establishing a powerful monarchy in the Peloponnesus, to the greater part of which he laid claim, on the ground that he was derived from Hercules through the Heraclid Temenus, who had received Argos for his portion. The inhabitants of Pisa, in the district of Elis, besought his aid in obtaining the restoration of their former privilege of presiding at the Olympic Games, of which they had been deprived by the Eleans. Phidon, however, believed that the right lay with himself, as a descendant of the god in whose honour the festivals were held. He therefore expelled the Eleans from Olympia, and celebrated the Games in conjunction with the citizens of Pisa. In the following Olympiad (the ninth), the Eleans once more acquired the management of the festival, which thenceforward rested with them. The interference of Phidon was resented by the Spartans, who, uniting their forces with those of the Eleans, defeated the Argive sovereign. This defeat seems to have put an end to his power altogether, although the fact is more a matter of conjecture than of absolute knowledge. But, in any case, Phidon is an important figure in the morning of Greek history. He is one of the very earliest Hellenes who can be regarded as unquestionably historic, and he appears to have been a man of capacity and power. He introduced into Greece, for the first time, a copper and a silver coinage, and a scale of weights and measures. The coinage and the scale are usually called Æginetan; but it has been doubted whether the former was really first struck in Ægina, nor is it certain that the latter was originally determined then. At a later day, the Euboic scale was used in Eubœa, at Athens, and in the Ionic cities generally; but the so-called Æginetan scale, of which Phidon was probably the author, continued in repute among the Doric communities.

Lacedæmon, or Sparta (for the names are interchangeable), was but a small country at the period of the First Olympiad, although the second of the Doric States, with Messenia for the third. Primarily, the name indicated the city, but it was also used so as to include the surrounding territory which owned its authority, and found sustenance for its inhabitants. That territory extended at first but little beyond the valley of the Eurotas; but it was afterwards very considerably augmented. The people were among the most energetic and resolute in all Greece. Destitute of those literary, artistic, and philosophical aptitudes

GENERAL VIEW OF SPARTA, RESTORED.

which have given to some of the other Grecian States the most unfading glory in the history of the human intellect, the Spartans were perhaps on that very account better qualified for success in soldiership, which was all they seemed to value. The Spartan discipline was the severest in the world, and it succeeded admirably in producing a race of dauntless and obedient warriors, if it did nothing else. Some doubt is felt as to the origin of the peculiar institutions which are associated with the name of Lycurgus. A rather similar body of laws existed in Crete, where, as the preceding Chapter has set forth, they were attributed to the semi-fabulous king, Minos. They may, however, have been carried into Crete by the Dorian colonists, and one of the speculations of modern scholarship is that these laws were common to the whole Doric race. But this is at least doubtful, and, on the whole, it seems likely that the legislation of Lycurgus, while possessing certain general Doric features, was distinctively Spartan in some important respects.

Lycurgus is one of those names which are among the most illustrious in the annals of the ancient world, while at the same time the person himself is involved in a dusky twilight. Plutarch begins his life of this worthy by remarking that absolutely nothing could be affirmed concerning him which was not controverted. An ancient Greek writer, named Timæus, believed that there were two persons of the same name, whose actions had been ascribed to one; others have doubted whether there was any such person at all. The reality of his existence may perhaps be safely assumed; yet it is impossible to fix with confidence the date at which he lived. Xenophon, in his treatise on the laws of the Lacedæmonians, mentions a tradition that the great legislator flourished as far back as the time of the Heraclidæ; while Aristotle, in his "Politics," makes him a contemporary of King Iphitus of Elis, whom, in the year 776 B.C., he assisted in restoring the Olympic Games. The probability is that his era was the eighth or ninth century, though the tenth has also been suggested. His parentage is another matter with respect to which authorities are disagreed. It would seem, however, that he belonged to the old royal house of Sparta; at any rate, he was a person of considerable importance, even before the promulgation of his laws. One of the early and obscure kings of Sparta was Aristodemus, who belongs to the period of the Dorian irruption into the Peloponnesus. After his death, the throne was shared by his sons, Eurysthenes and Procles, and the kingly office continued for some generations to be hereditary in their lines, though a certain degree of precedence was granted to that of Eurysthenes, as the elder of the two sons. Lycurgus was generally believed to be a descendant of Procles; and, while other accounts of his origin are not wanting, that which traces his lineage back to Aristodemus is the one most commonly accepted by those who have looked closely into the subject.

The story is that he was the son of Eunomus, one of the joint kings of Sparta, who was killed in endeavouring to quell a popular tumult. The eldest son, Polydectes, died shortly afterwards, leaving his widow in expectation of a child. The woman, being of an ambitious and intriguing character, proposed to Lycurgus that he should marry her, that the child should be destroyed, and that her second husband should assume the crown. Lycurgus affected to consent, but secretly gave orders to his attendants to form a guard about the queen, and to bring the infant to him, should it prove to be a son, directly it was born. He was sitting at table with the magistrates when his servants entered with a newly-born child, whom he at once proclaimed king by the name of Charilaus, expressive of the joy which such an event would create among the people. The queen-mother revenged herself upon Lycurgus by accusing him of a design against the life of the infant which he had in fact saved from death. He therefore withdrew from Sparta, and during a course of many years wandered from one land to another, studying the institutions by which each was distinguished, and revolving in his mind that system of laws which he afterwards recommended to his countrymen.

It is stated that he visited Crete, Ionia (in Asia Minor), Egypt, Iberia, Libya, and India, though the last-mentioned seems doubtful. By the time he returned to Sparta the young king had grown up to manhood, but the political state was in confusion. Doubting whether his scheme of laws would amend this condition, and yet being desirous of making the experiment, Lycurgus consulted the Delphic oracle, and, according to the legend, was hailed as a man of almost divine wisdom. With assurances of celestial favour and support, he presented himself in the market-place of Sparta, accompanied by thirty distinguished citizens in arms, and proposed a new body of customs to the people. This was in the first instance opposed by Charilaus, who afterwards gave his consent to the laws being tried. Nevertheless, a number of popular commotions ensued, and, on one of these occasions, a youth struck out

an eye of the reformer. In the end, however, Lycurgus prevailed, and, announcing his intention of again quitting Sparta, he exacted from the people an oath that they would observe his laws without alteration until his return. His design was never to return, and in this way to bind the citizens irrevocably to the social and military system which he had established. He then went to Delphi, and received the approval of Apollo; after which nothing more was heard of him. Where or when he died is not known. It was believed that he had mysteriously disappeared, and the Spartans honoured him with a temple, and with yearly sacrifices as to a god.

The institutions of Lycurgus were specially designed to maintain the supremacy of the Doric Spartans over the race which had been vanquished and dispossessed several generations earlier; and the disturbances which confronted the lawgiver on his return from distant lands, and which he found it no easy task to overcome, may have been due to some endeavour of the servile population to reclaim their rights. At any rate, it is obvious that the existence of such classes must have been a perpetual danger to the commonwealth, and that the only choice lay between conceding them equality of privileges, and keeping them in constant subjection by the unflinching application of military force. In the Peloponnesian war, Brasidas, addressing his army —an army, by the way, largely composed of manumitted Helots—observed, "We are a few in the midst of many enemies; we can maintain ourselves only by fighting and conquering." This, of course, was spoken of external enemies; but it was equally applicable to the domestic foe, who had been made a foe by ill-usage. The dominant race is thought not to have exceeded nine thousand men; the other two classes—the Perioeci, who, without being slaves, had no political rights, and the Helots, who were actual serfs, and tilled the land for their masters—were greatly superior, numerically, to the Spartan warriors who held them in check. To maintain the supremacy of the chosen few, it was necessary to establish a system of the most rigid discipline, to inure the body to hardship and suffering from an early age, and to encourage a contempt of danger, and even of death, in those who were to carry on the high prerogative of governing. It would seem that both the Perioeci and the Helots were descendants of the old Achæan population of Laconia (or mainly so), and that the difference in their treatment resulted from the ancestors of the latter having opposed a more stubborn resistance than those of the former to the invasion of the Dorians. Even the Helots, however, were treated with some consideration in the earlier ages of Spartan history; but when, owing to the natural laws of increase, they became formidable by their numbers, nothing could exceed the cruelty with which they were oppressed. Compelled to wear a peculiar garb, like the Jews of the Middle Ages, they were at all turns reminded of their inferior position. They fought, indeed, in the wars of the Doric Spartans, as did also the Perioeci; but their fidelity was doubtful, for it was known that they hated their tyrants with an intense and mortal hatred. Revolts sometimes occurred, and, to render these the less likely, a secret service, called Cryptia, was instituted, by which (unless the facts have been exaggerated by report) certain Spartan youths were authorised to go about the country, assassinating every Helot whom they might suspect of insubordination, or even of a superiority which might encourage dangerous ambitions.

The conquering race was divided into three tribes, which at first enjoyed equal rights. This state of things, however, did not continue; for a Spartan's retention of his privileges depended on his paying a certain amount to the Syssitia, or public tables, and it happened after a while that some of the citizens were unable, through poverty, to fulfil that condition. Hence arose a disfranchised and inferior class, even among the men of Doric blood. The existence of such a class must still further have weakened the governing body, and there was but little to give solidity to the institutions of the State. The monarchical power, purposely weakened by being divided between two kings, who were frequently at issue with one another, sank at length into little more than the exercise of military command, and the performance of sacerdotal duties. The Senate, the members of which were judges as well as legislators, consisted of nominees who sat for life. The Popular Assembly possessed only very restricted functions; and the most important powers of the State were centred in the five Ephors, who came at length to exercise a control over the whole internal and external government of the commonwealth, but who, being elected annually by the entire Doric-Spartan community, excepting those who had lost their franchise, were essentially a democratic body, so far as the conquering race was concerned. The authority of these Ephors was ultimately so great that they not only dismissed subordinate magistrates, but arrested and fined the kings themselves when they considered them to have done ill. Such were the political institutions of Sparta, existing, with some variations, both before and after the time of Lycurgus. The

object of that legislator was not so much to effect political reforms as to create a set of customs and habits which should mould the character of the people to his ideal of military and manly virtue; and for the promotion of such an end his laws were admirably adapted.

The central principle of those laws was that the individual belonged to the State, and had no interests or rights apart from the community of which he was a member,—always understanding by the community the comparatively small body of Doric Spartans, whose chief concern was to order things to their own advantage. Every child, as soon as born, was examined with a view to ascertaining whether it was strong and healthily made, or deformed and feeble: in the latter event, it was exposed on Mount Taygetus, and left to perish. This method of getting rid of weakly children seems peculiarly cruel; but it was perhaps an attempt to evade the guilt of actual infanticide. Lycurgus desired to create a nation of capable soldiers; therefore, only the vigorous were permitted to live. Up to the age of seven, all children were left to the care of their mothers; after that, the boys were given over to the public classes, where their training was conducted by State officers, under the supervision of the elders. This training consisted principally of gymnastics and military exercises. The young Spartan was, indeed, taught to sing, and to play upon the lyre; but the poetry and music with which he was alone familiarised were such as commemorated the feats of heroes, or spoke the praises of the gods. He was to express himself in as few words as possible, and with a systematic contempt for those oratorical arts on which the intellectual Athenians prided themselves. Thus his education was mainly physical, and involved a great deal of actual suffering. His dress was extremely scanty, and it was no ampler in the winter than in the summer. The Spartan youths slept on reeds gathered from the bed of the river Eurotas, and had to bear frequent blows, not merely for correction, but also for discipline. Sham battles were conducted with real interchange of wounds. Hunger and thirst, the violence of the seasons, fatiguing journeys and perilous enterprises, were to be endured with cheerful submission at the bidding of the public authorities. Often these youthful heroes were left without any food whatever, and bidden to obtain it in the best way they could, by hunting, or even by stealing, though, if detected in the latter, they were punished, not for the theft, but for their clumsiness in betraying the fact. The severest feature in their discipline was an ordeal to which they were subjected in early boyhood. They were scourged at the altar of Artemis (the Greek Diana) with such merciless severity that their blood frequently sprinkled the shrine of the goddess, and many died under the lash. The most extraordinary feature in this cruel observance was the fact that the torture was inflicted in presence of the parents, who incited their children to bear without flinching the utmost extremity of anguish.

The Syssitia (otherwise called Phiditia) are said to have been borrowed from the public meals of the Cretans: at any rate, the principle was the same, and the design in both cases was to prevent over-indulgence of the palate, and the use of luxurious viands. Each citizen had to provide his own food, and to pay a small sum in addition; whereas in Crete the tables were supported by the public revenue, which Aristotle considered a much better method. Meat, fish, and game were eaten but rarely, and the fare seems for the most part to have consisted of barley-meal, cheese, figs, wine, and a certain mysterious concoction known to history as "black broth," the precise nature of which cannot now be ascertained. It is a singular fact that, while the men fed but humbly, the women, in their own homes, lived after a luxurious fashion. Aristotle was told that Lycurgus desired to subject the women equally with the men to this stern discipline of the appetite, but that they resisted with such obstinacy as to compel him to abandon the attempt.* This is the more remarkable, as the female members of the community were in other respects obliged to follow a severe system of training. They were exercised publicly in running, wrestling, and boxing, and the sole object of their lives was that they should become the mothers of strong and healthy children. Spartan women were generally married at the age of twenty,—the young men not until they were thirty; and their wedded intercourse was so strictly regulated for several years that they were but seldom together, and were frequently constrained to meet by stealth. Yet the Spartan matrons were treated with great respect, and enjoyed a degree of influence which to foreign nations, and even to other Greeks, appeared unreasonable and excessive. They were accused of hardness and arrogance, and it has even been doubted whether their courage in the hour of danger and reverse was at all remarkable. But the purity of their morals, in spite of some influences which might have seemed adverse to such a result, was generally admitted. Jealousy was

* Grote's History of Greece, Part II., chap. 6.

unknown to the Spartan husband, because the arts of profligacy found no congenial soil among that temperate and sober-blooded race.

The supervision of the State over the male Spartan did not cease with his youth, or even at his marriage. The period of enforced military service, however, terminated at sixty; after which, the men enjoyed a time of repose and honour, when their chief duties consisted in directing the conduct of the young. Reverence for old age was one of the best qualities of the Lacedæmonians. Xenophon has remarked that the gait and manner of the Spartan youths, as they passed along the streets, exhibited an admirable modesty and reserve, and that in the presence of their elders they were as bashful as virgins, and as silent as statues, unless when addressed.* Repulsive as were many features of the Spartan discipline—lamentably incomplete as was the system, regarded either as an education for the individual, or as a model for a commonwealth—it cannot be denied that the legislation of Lycurgus bore some noble fruits. Courage, endurance, and resolution,—good faith and mutual reliance,—respect for authority,—strength and activity, morality and self-control,—these were the better qualities of that remarkable system which flourished for many generations on the banks of the Eurotas. But they were purchased at a fearful price. That price was the extinction of the benevolent and sympathetic elements in human nature; of the most ordinary affections; of tenderness and pity; of all that can soften, all that can adorn, all that can elevate life; of the sentiment of justice, and the better side of civilisation. At the best, the Spartan was only a magnificent savage; at the worst, he was a ruffian, acting systematically, and with all the resources of a great organisation for wrongdoing. The arts were discouraged and condemned, because they interfered with the iron routine of the barrack; literature was neglected, because it widened the thoughts of men. The whole system, in short, was vitiated by its origin. It was an attempt on the part of a few Lacedæmonians to domineer over a much larger number of other Greeks, as well entitled to liberty as themselves; and their own freedom was justly compromised in the too successful endeavour.

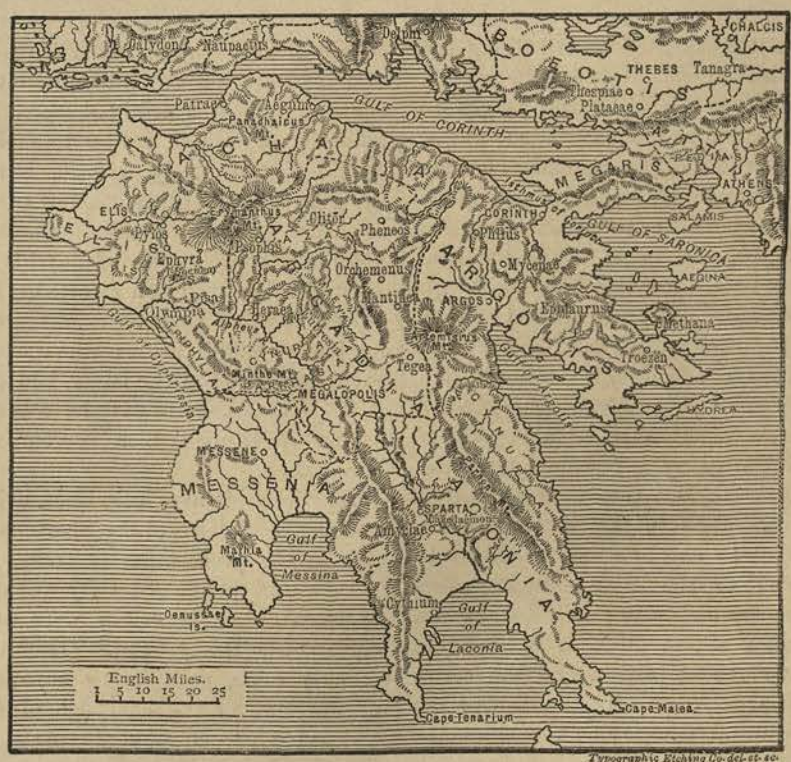
To what extent Lycurgus reformed the landed system of Sparta is very uncertain. On returning from foreign countries, he found among other causes of disorder a very unequal distribution of property. The land was for the most part owned by a few rich men; the rest of the people were poor and wretched. It is related of Lycurgus that he remedied these evils by making a new division of the land, and that he distributed the territory immediately surrounding Sparta into nine thousand equal lots, and the rest of Laconia into thirty thousand equal lots. The former were assigned to the Spartan citizens, the latter to the Perioeci. Such was the belief of later antiquity, but by the writers of an earlier day no such division of landed property is mentioned. Even in periods subsequent to the time of Lycurgus, property was very unequally held by the Spartans; so that if the legislator really made any attempt in the direction of equality, it was speedily defeated by the natural tendency of human affairs to create an opposite condition. He may, indeed, have done something to redress the sufferings of the poor, and to abate the privileges of the rich; but it is not likely that he carried out his reforms to the extent which tradition asserted. Laconia, in the widest sense of that term, was not under the dominion of the Spartans when Lycurgus promulgated his laws for the latter, and the experiment, if made at all, could only have been made in the narrow territory which surrounded the city of Lacedæmon.

However this may have been, it is pretty certain that the regulations of the Spartans were unfavourable to the prosecution of trade, so far, at least, as their own privileged body was concerned. The Spartans of Doric origin were neither to traffic nor to till the ground. They were a purely military caste, and their occupations were those of warriors, to the exclusion of everything else. The many anecdotes of Lycurgus include one to the effect that he banished all gold and silver money from the country, and allowed nothing to circulate but bars of iron, so heavy and cumbrous that it was impossible for any one to amass great riches. But, as it is in the highest degree doubtful whether a gold or a silver coinage was known in Greece until after his day, the legend must follow the course of many others which have been submitted to the test of historic criticism. The absence of commerce among the Spartans made the want of gold and silver a matter of slight importance; yet, by a natural reaction of public feeling, the extreme severity of the Spartan discipline created in the people a degree of avarice which caused them to be ignobly conspicuous in the Grecian community. For luxury they did not care; to the refinements of art they were indifferent; commerce they despised; every kind of splendour was to their minds a form of effe-

* On the Government of Lacedæmon, chap. 3.

minacy; yet to heap up money was a delight which they could not resist. Before this potent spell even their rugged virtue melted. A Spartan was usually open to a bribe, and even the dignity of women was sometimes compromised by the love of gain. It was the one escape left open from a life of hard routine and rigid self-repression.

The purity of the Spartan customs was secured, so far as it could be secured at all, by enactments



MAP OF THE PELOPONNESUS.

forbidding all strangers to reside at Lacedæmon without special permission, and all Spartans to go abroad without leave of the magistrates. That these regulations were broken through in time is not surprising, and their infraction was followed by a great loosening of the former habits of discipline, without the Spartan character being supplied with the elements it had always lacked. Among the other ordinances of the great lawgiver were two which at the first blush appear surprising. He enjoined his people never to pursue an enemy farther than was necessary to make their own victory complete, and under no circumstances to wage frequent war upon the same foe. These rules might suggest the existence of a humane consideration for others, were it not that such a feeling was entirely opposed to the whole nature of the Spartans, and the uniform drift of their legislation. The first was doubtless the result of a merely prudential consideration as to the folly of being led into distant and undefined perils; the second was intended to guard against the possibility of an enemy learning by repeated discomfiture the military tactics by which he had been beaten. Trusting to the natural defences of the city, which was planted in the midst of mountains very difficult of access, Lycurgus directed that Sparta should not be surrounded with walls, and it was accordingly at no time fortified. The legislator perceived that a reliance upon external battlements might diminish the confidence of the citizens in their own valour, and would thus reduce those soldier-like qualities which are undoubtedly the chief safeguard of a State. Sparta was situated so far inland that it could not be attacked from the sea; and an enemy marching over the mountains could be readily encountered in the narrow passes that gave access to the valley of the Eurotas.

All these circumstances combined to give the Lacedæmonians the highest position as a Greek military power in the early ages of authentic

history. Occupying in the first instance a very small territory round the city which was the seat of their dominion, they gradually succeeded, though not without a prolonged struggle, in extending their sway over the whole of Laconia. Ambition is always stimulated by success, and the Spartans, having obtained this advantage, began to covet possession of Messenia—a country lying to the west of their own, and extending to the shores of the Cyparissian Gulf. Three Messenian wars are known to history; but the last occurred at a much later date than those with which we are now concerned. The details of the first and second contests are very inexactly recorded. No contemporary account of the events is in existence, and we have to rely for our information upon the narrative of Pausanias, who lived in the second century of the Christian era, and who compiled his relation from authors much older, indeed, than himself, but still living at a period remote from the alleged incidents. Still, there is not the slightest reason to doubt that these two Messenian wars really took place, and we have no choice but to follow the history of Pausanias, with the understanding that it is to be received in a reasonable spirit of caution.

ARISTOMENES FIGHTING HIS WAY OUT OF IRA.

The territories of Sparta and Messenia were divided by Mount Taygetus, on the summit of which was a temple of Artemis, or Diana, common to both people. One of the Spartan kings, named Teleclus, was slain on this spot in an affray provoked, as the Spartans alleged, by certain Messenian youths who were attempting to outrage some Spartan virgins, but, as the Messenians declared, by a treacherous attack made on them by Teleclus, who had disguised several young men in female dresses, and armed them with concealed daggers. Whatever the truth may have been, Teleclus was killed, and the Spartans determined to avenge his death. Nevertheless, they did not declare war at once, but apparently waited for further provocation, or for a better opportunity of attacking their neighbours. Some time later, a distinguished Messenian received an injury at the hands of a Spartan, and, being unable to obtain redress, retaliated by killing all of the offending nationality who fell under his power. The Spartans required the surrender of this person, but were refused, and at once prepared their forces for war. Having suddenly crossed the frontier, without any previous notice of their intention, they captured the fortress of Amphea, and slew the inhabitants. The struggle endured for nineteen years, extending, according to Pausanias,

from 743 to 724 B.C., though the real date is supposed to have been earlier. The Messenians fought with great resolution, and for the first four years with so much success that the Spartans made scarcely any progress. In the fifth year their fortunes began to ebb, and, although there were great fluctuations during subsequent years,—the Spartans being sometimes in the ascendant, and at others driven back towards their own territory,—the result of the war was the complete defeat of the Messenians. The chief hero on the side of these ill-starred people was Aristodemus, who was descended from the royal line, and ultimately chosen king on the death of an earlier monarch. In the course of the struggle, other Greek nationalities were drawn into the vortex of the war; the Corinthians fighting on the side of the Spartans, and the Arcadians and Sicyonians on that of their enemies. When the Messenians were thoroughly vanquished, many of them sought refuge in Arcadia, while the priestly families fled to Eleusis, in Attica. The rest were treated with the utmost severity, and reduced to the condition of Helots.

The second Messenian war is said to have lasted from 685 to 668 B.C. If so, thirty-nine years must have elapsed between the close of the first and the commencement of the second war; but here again the dates are problematical. However, there can be no question that the intermediate period was one of extreme suffering to the Messenians, and they only awaited a fitting opportunity for delivering themselves from a bondage which must always have been hard to bear. Their leader was Aristomenes, a descendant of the ancient kings, and a man of heroic nature and military genius. The Spartans were again assisted by Corinth, while the Messenians once more found allies in the Arcadians and Sicyonians, together with the Argives and the people of Pisa. The first battle (which was fought before the arrival of the allies on either side) went badly for the Lacedæmonians, and Aristomenes, entering Sparta itself by night, affixed a shield to the temple of Minerva of the Brazen House, on which he had written the words, "Dedicated by Aristomenes to the goddess, from the Spartan spoils." With all their self-reliance and equable temperament, the Spartans were alarmed at this exploit; but, according to the legend, their spirits were excited to fresh ardour by the martial strains of the bard Tyrtæus, who had been sent to them by the Athenians. They continued, nevertheless, to suffer reverses for some time longer; but in the third year of the war the Messenians were defeated, owing to the treachery of one of their Arcadian allies.

Aristomenes now shut himself up in the mountain fortress of Ira, and bade defiance to his enemies for eleven years. Sallying forth from time to time, he ravaged Laconia, and regained the security of his walls. His deeds of personal daring are like those which are related of Arthur, of Alfred, of Bruce, and of Wallace; and the stories that are told of his strength, valour, and perseverance have that quality of romance which belongs to all early legends, and which sometimes borders closely on the mythical. He is said to have been taken prisoner three times, and three times to have made his escape. But, after a series of prodigious efforts on the part both of chieftain and people, Ira was surprised by the Spartans, and Aristomenes, who had received a dangerous wound, experienced the utmost difficulty in fighting his way, with a small body of heroes, through the serried ranks of his opponents. Having gained the soil of Arcadia, he formed plans for a further prosecution of the war; but these were betrayed by an Arcadian, who was afterwards stoned to death by his indignant countrymen. Aristomenes died subsequently in Rhodes, and his sons led a colony of Messenians to Rhegium, in southern Italy. The main body of the Messenians were reduced to slavery, and the country itself was incorporated with Laconia.

The reputation of Sparta was largely increased by these successes, and she was universally acknowledged as the chief power in the Peloponnesus. Her alliance was sought by all the smaller states, and she was sometimes called in to determine local quarrels where the disputants wished to avoid the necessity of active warfare. The Arcadians had given great offence to Sparta by taking the side of Messenia, and, after the close of the Messenian war, Arcadia was attacked with so much vigour that the southern part of the country was entirely reduced. The Lacedæmonians, however, were not invariably successful, and the city of Tegea, situated in the south-eastern corner of Arcadia, was enabled by the valour of its inhabitants to put a serious check upon the career of Spartan conquest. In the time of Lycurgus, the territory of Tegea had been invaded by the Spartans; but the result of the enterprise was disastrous, the assailants being defeated with great loss, and their king, Charilaus, taken prisoner. The attempt was repeated in subsequent ages, but for a long while without success. At length, on consulting the Delphic Oracle, the Spartans were promised a fortunate issue, if they would bring the bones of Orestes, the son of Agamemnon, to their

own country. They were to search for these relics at Tegea, and some gigantic remains are said to have been dug up there, and carried away. The people of Tegea regarded the bones as a species of palladium or charm, giving security to their city; and when, by the adroit management of a Spartan, they had been removed to Lacedæmon, the bereaved citizens appear to have lost heart, as considering that their cause had been abandoned by the deity. They no longer fought with animation, but were defeated in a series of encounters. Finally, they acknowledged the supremacy of Sparta, and, while retaining a nominal independence, became the humble allies of their former enemy, whose policy they were now constrained to support, whatever direction it might follow. This was about 560 B.C., at which time the struggle between the two opponents had been maintained, with intervals, for more than two hundred years.

The rivalry between Sparta and Argos, begun in an earlier age, was frequently renewed, and generally to the advantage of the former. Not only were the Laconian dependencies of Argos absorbed by the Spartans, but the district of Cynuria, on the southern frontier of the Argives, was likewise annexed. The defeated were not willing to accept with resignation so grave a loss. Cynuria, though but a little tract of land, was valuable as a barrier against the formidable power continually threatening Argos from the south. The Argives accordingly made an attempt to recover it in 547 B.C. It was arranged by the opposing chiefs that the point in dispute should be decided by a combat between three hundred picked warriors on each side. The result of this encounter is said to have been the destruction of all the combatants with the exception of one Spartan and two Argives. The existence of the Spartan not being noticed by the two Argives, the latter returned home with news of victory. The matter, however, was very far from being decided; for, as Othryades, the Spartan, remained upon the field, where he erected a trophy out of the arms and armour of his slain antagonists, the victory was claimed by the Lacedæmonians as well as by the Argives. A general battle ensued, and the Argives were defeated; but Othryades threw himself on his sword, in order that he might not be reproached by his fellow-countrymen as the only one who had survived the smaller conflict. Cynuria was in this way secured to the Spartans, and Argos was not able to lift up her head for many years.

The predominance of Sparta was now undisputed throughout the whole of Greece. Had the Lacedæmonians been desirous of establishing a single government for an united Hellas, they might possibly have accomplished such a design; but it was a sufficient satisfaction to their ambition to create a military pre-eminence which for the time no one was able to withstand. The fame of their martial city spread even into distant countries, and Crœsus the Lydian sent ambassadors with gifts to solicit their alliance, when directed by the Delphic Oracle to make the most powerful of the Greeks his friends. The Lydian bribe was accepted, and Sparta entered into a league with Crœsus. Whether this alliance would at any time have been attended by advantage to either party, is problematical; but, not long after, Crœsus was attacked and overthrown by Cyrus the Persian. Nevertheless, the fact of such an alliance being requested was a great testimony to the position that Sparta had acquired. Her military discipline, the valour of her people, the subjection of the individual to the will of the State, had borne the fruits which might naturally have been expected. It cannot, however, be said that any of the higher objects of government had been accomplished by this energetic race. Mankind was neither better nor happier for the iron rule of Sparta. Freedom was not advanced by methods so essentially despotic; no true prosperity could permanently result from such an ideal of national life. The system of Lycurgus had taught the Greek what it was to be a soldier; but it had taught him nothing else.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE GREEK TYRANNIES: SOLON AND THE EARLY HISTORY OF ATHENS.

Rise of the Tyrants—Character of the Despotic Governments—Sicyon, Corinth, and Megara—Dictatorship of Pittacus in the Island of Lesbos—Government of Athens by Archons—Political and Social Arrangements in that State—The Laws of Draco—Sedition of Cylon—Sacrilege of the Alcmæonidæ, and their Banishment from Athens—Epimenides the Cretan—Early Life of Solon—His Recovery of Salamis to the Athenians—Anarchical State of Athens—Solon appointed Sovereign Legislator—His Measures for Relieving the Poor—Reforms in the Political Constitution—The Council of Four Hundred and the Popular Assembly—Minor Regulations of Solon—His Subsequent Travels—Renewed Dissensions in Athens—Plots of Pisistratus—Death of Solon—Pisistratus Dictator of Athens—His varied Fortunes—Final Establishment of his Power—Mild and Intelligent Character of the Dictatorship—Death of Pisistratus.

AT a very early date, as previously explained, the monarchical governments of Greece were changed into republics. Sparta was an exception to this rule; but it was the only one. Elsewhere, the authority of the kings passed, by its first transition, into the hands of the nobles, who elected from their own small body a kind of President, or a number of magistrates appointed to carry on the affairs of the commonwealth. These oligarchies governed selfishly, as oligarchies generally do. When, however, the territorial class had decreased in numbers and wealth, and the rustics, artisans, and traders had grown more powerful, and better fitted to assume a part in government, the anomaly of the political state became glaringly apparent. It was plain that the nobility could not long continue to override their respective communities; yet the people were not sufficiently organised to take the control into their own hands. By a development usual among nations, it happened in most of the Greek republics that the popular cause was championed by a species of usurpers called Tyrants, who in various ways contrived to get possession of the supreme power, but who often used it for the benefit of the greater number. The word "Tyrant" among the Greeks did not convey those ideas of cruel and wanton oppression which it suggests to the modern mind. It simply meant a ruler who substituted his personal will for the more elaborate system of transmitted law. Such a method of administration is of course attended by dangers of its own, and may lead to a despotism of the worst kind. Under the most favourable circumstances, it is an arrangement which can be justified only as an intermediate stage between something worse and something better. But it is frequently a necessary step in political and social progress, and such it appears to have been in the case of Greece.

The first appearance of the Tyrannies was in the earlier portion of the seventh century B.C., and for nearly two hundred years—that is to say, until about 500 B.C.—this form of government prevailed in Hellas. We need have no hesitation in believing that these despotisms were at first a great improvement on the aristocratical rule which they displaced. But the inevitable corruption came with time. Although often encouragers of literature and the arts, the Tyrants at length made themselves abhorred by their arbitrary edicts; and their attempts to establish dynasties were usually defeated, either by assassination or by revolution. The overthrow of personal despotism did not lead to the re-establishment of the oligarchy. The nobles endeavoured to regain what they had lost; but the people were too strong for them. Sparta, which helped to suppress several of the Tyrannies, though certainly from no love of freedom, gave her support to the aristocratical bodies, and an era of great disturbance ensued. The main result, however, was that the democracy obtained a permanent control over the State, and that the nobility were deprived of the injurious privileges they had at one time possessed. In some instances, the movement of the despots against the landed proprietors took the form of a struggle of races. Orthagoras, the founder of a dynasty of tyrants at Sicyon, which endured from 676 until about 560 B.C., belonged to the old Ionian stock; and he and his successors did their utmost to depress the Dorian element in the population. The last of the dynasty was Clisthenes, who distinguished himself by two victories in the chariot-races, one at the Pythian and one at the Olympic Games, and who aided the Amphictyons in their war against the port and town of Cirrha, provoked (as already related) by the impiety of the inhabitants towards the pilgrims who sought the shrine of Apollo at Delphi. Clisthenes was a man of wealth and splendid tastes; but he gave great offence to one portion of his subjects, though the smaller portion, by the harsh and insulting way in which he treated all of Dorian origin. When he died, about 560

B.C., his dynasty came to an end; and although this seems to have been due to the want of a male heir, it is probable that the Sicyonians had begun to tire of despotic government.

Corinth was ruled by despots for seventy-four years. In 655 B.C. Cypselus overthrew the Bacchiadæ, a family of nobles long associated with the city. He himself was connected with this family through his mother, but his father belonged to an inferior class. When an infant, his life was attempted by the Bacchiadæ, who had been alarmed by an oracle declaring that the child would prove their ruin. His mother, however, succeeded in rearing him, and, on his attaining to manhood, he avenged her wrongs and his own by expelling the nobles, and seizing the supreme power. He died in 625 B.C., and left the government to his son Periander, who, unlike his father, ruled with great sternness. Some of the worst stories related of him may be false; but it seems probable that he surrounded himself with a body-guard of mercenaries, that he put to death several rich and powerful citizens, and that his measures generally were characterised by that quality which answers to the later idea of despotism. Nevertheless, he was a ruler of large capacity, and was even counted among the seven wise men of Greece. Corinth was raised by him to a condition of unexampled prosperity and grandeur. Its trade surpassed that of all other commercial cities in the Hellenic world, and its citizens founded colonies on the coast of Acarnania (south of Epirus), and in the neighbouring islands of the Ionian Sea. Periander thus added several of the north-western parts of Greece, both insular and continental, to his dominions. His system of government included some of the best and some of the worst features of personal rule; but it lacked the elements of permanence. The masses were conciliated at the expense of the aristocracy. Sumptuary laws were passed; public education was abolished; common tables, clubs, and houses of resort, were forbidden; a court was established for the trial of citizens who had wasted their patrimony; and learning and the arts were fostered. Though possessed of a strong army and navy, Periander engaged in few wars; but he aided the Mityleneans against the Athenians, and effected the conquest of Epidaurus, in the Peloponnesus. In his old age, he was desirous of resigning in favour of his son, but died in possession of power, after a reign of forty years, in 585 B.C. His successor was Psammetichus, the son of Gorgias, who reigned scarcely four years, when, as it is supposed, the government was violently suppressed by the Spartans. In Megara, the despotism of Theagenes was succeeded by a prolonged and fiery contest between the nobles and the commons, ending in the success of the former. During the temporary predominance of the democracy a species of socialism was enforced. The property of the rich was seized, and so many acts of tyranny were committed that a reaction was inevitable, and followed in due course.

In the island of Lesbos, Pittacus, another of the Seven Sages, wielded exceptional powers for resisting the attacks of the nobles, who had been exiled. He had previously joined with the leaders of the aristocracy in expelling the tyrant Melanchrus, about 612 B.C., and had then commanded in a war against the Athenians in the Troad. The authority conferred by his fellow-citizens, Pittacus resigned in 579 B.C., after having used it with singular moderation for ten years. He was thus enabled to found a free Lesbian republic on a popular basis; but in truth his power was that of a Dictator appointed by the people, not that of a Tyrant who had by his own act usurped the position he desired to fill. The one office is indeed very apt to pass into the other; but it was not so with Pittacus, who seems to have been one of the most estimable men of antiquity. Among his recorded sayings are three, to the effect that "the greatest blessing a man could enjoy was the power of doing good;" that "victory should never be stained with blood;" and that "pardon was often a more effectual check on crime than punishment." The Asiatic and Sicilian colonies of Greece were sometimes ruled by Tyrants; but of these we shall have occasion to speak further on. The nature of the Greek Tyrannies has for the present been sufficiently illustrated by the foregoing examples.

In Athens, the kingly office ceased after the heroic death of Codrus in opposing the Dorian invaders at a very early period of Greek history.* Monarchy was abolished in Attica, not out of dislike, but out of a feeling of extreme reverence for one who had conferred so much honour on the post that nobody was thought worthy to succeed him. The change, however, was originally rather titular than real. The head of the State was called an Archon—that is, simply a Ruler; but the office was at first held for life, and confined to the family of Codrus. By many successive changes, the duration of power was restricted to ten years, and the office was thrown open to all the nobles. Thus Athens, and indeed the whole of Attica, of which Athens was the capital, became an oligarchy. In 683 B.C., a governing body of *nine* archons was

* See p. 287 of this volume.

established, one of whom had powers superior to the rest, while none held office for more than a year. All were chosen by the nobles, and of course selected from their own body; for the people, in the widest sense of the term, had no political rights whatever. The plebeians were divided into husbandmen and artisans; but both were equally subject to the patricians. The social grades of the Athenians were very elaborate; for, besides the general distribution of the populace into four tribes, there were various minor divisions,

The need of a written body of laws became so serious, owing to the arbitrary way in which the archons delivered their judgments, that in 624 B.C. Draco was appointed to draw up a code. Possibly, this celebrated legislator did little more than reduce to a fixed and definite form the floating traditions of Athenian jurisprudence. But in any case the laws which go by his name are characterised, so far as we know them, by a spirit of merciless severity. All crimes, all offences, were to be punished with death. Idleness was subjected to

CLISTHENES AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES.

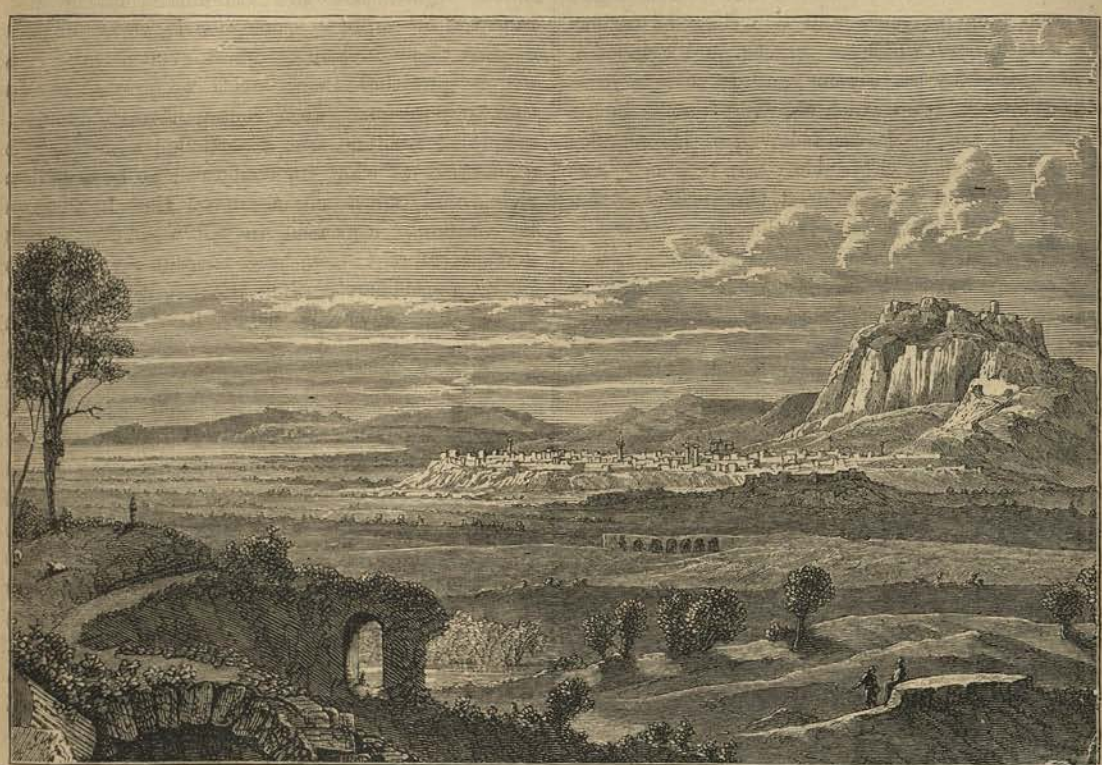
distinguished by particular duties or liabilities, military, religious, or financial. Of the nine archons, the first exercised the office of president over the whole body, and, besides representing the State, protected widows and orphans, and decided family disputes; the second, called Basileus, or King, acted as high-priest of the nation; the third commanded the troops; while the other six administered the law, and to some extent made it by their authoritative decisions. The Senate—ultimately called the Council of Areopagus, from the hill of Ares, or Mars, opposite the Acropolis, where its members met—was as aristocratical in its formation as the court of archons, all of whom, at the expiration of their year of office, became senators.

the same penalty as murder or sacrilege, and Draco is said to have observed that the smallest transgression appeared to him worthy of the most extreme punishment, while he could do nothing more in respect of the largest. The general conscience, however, revolted against such sanguinary edicts, and the Draconian code was frequently evaded, as such codes are apt to be. Nevertheless, Draco admitted extenuating circumstances in the case of homicide caused by accident, or under provocation—an act which had been placed by the archons on the same footing as wilful murder. Still, the general effect of Draco's laws was most oppressive. Popular discontent spread and deepened, and the people appeared ripe for a change.

This encouraged a noble named Cylon to make

an attempt which, had it succeeded, would have established him in the same position as that of the Tyrants in other parts of Greece. He was the son-in-law of Theagenes, the despot of Megara, and, thinking to emulate the achievements of that ruler, he took possession of the Acropolis, or citadel of Athens, during the celebration of the Olympic Games. His force was composed of Athenian malcontents, aided by troops sent to him by Theagenes. The movement, however, proved a failure. The archons, seeing the formidable nature of the sedition, despatched a large body of soldiers against the insurgents, who were blockaded in the place they had seized. Cylon himself escaped, but the others, finding they stood in danger of starving, fled from the walls, and took refuge at the altar of Athene, where, that their blood might not pollute the sanctuary, they were promised their lives if they would quit the temple. The engagement, however, was treacherously broken: all were killed, and some were slain even before the altar of the Eumenides, or Furies. This lamentable event occurred in 612 B.C., only a few years after the promulgation of the Draconian code. It left the Athenian commonwealth in a state of the utmost disorder; for, although the conspiracy of Cylon had been suppressed, the popular discontent was even more deeply seated than before. Not only did the relations of the slaughtered insurgents consider that a great wrong had been done them, but the Athenians generally regarded their death, under the circumstances by which it was attended, as an act of gross impiety, for which the whole city might be made to suffer from divine vengeance, if the sin were not purged away.

The chief offender was the archon Megacles, one of the powerful family of the Alcmæonidæ; but all the other members were thought to be tainted with the same guilt. Attempts were made to bring them to a trial; but they successfully resisted all such efforts for several years. At length they were persuaded by Solon (afterwards distinguished as the great Athenian lawgiver) to submit themselves to a special court composed of three hundred of their fellow-nobles. It may be fairly assumed that this court was not prejudiced against the accused; yet the Alcmæonidæ were found guilty of sacrilege, and expelled from Attica. The people would doubtless have preferred to see them executed, and it was believed that sufficient atonement had not been made for so heinous a crime. The relatives of Megacles were driven forth about



CORINTH.

597 B.C., and at the same time the bodies of the Alcmæonidæ who had recently died were taken out of their graves, and carried beyond the frontier. But a great pestilence shortly afterwards visited Athens, and the pious saw in this affliction a sign that the gods were angered. Appeal was made to the Delphic Oracle, and the Athenians were advised to seek the assistance of the Cretan prophet Epimenides, celebrated for his wisdom and his virtue. By those who exclude Periander, Epimenides is regarded as one of the Seven Sages. He was an epic poet, and a writer of various treatises, one of which, on oracles and responses, is mentioned by St. Jerome, and is said to have been the work from which St. Paul quotes in his Epistle to Titus.* It was believed of Epimenides that he had slept for fifty-seven years in a cave, and had during that time enjoyed the society of the gods, who instructed him in the rites by which they might be propitiated. He could also, it was said, dismiss his soul from his body, and recall it at pleasure. His life, according to ancient tradition, was prolonged to the extent of two hundred and eighty-nine years; and after his death he received the honours of a deity. Even in his life, he was regarded as a person of peculiar holiness, and the sacrifices and lustrations which he performed at Athens, in 596 B.C., gave the greatest satisfaction to the citizens, and were credited with having removed the plague from which they were suffering.

However much the ministrations of Epimenides may have relieved the minds of the Athenians on the score of violated religion, they could of course do nothing towards removing the political evils of the State. These required legislation, and it was felt that Solon was the fittest man for the purpose. Solon was a native of Salamis, an island near the coast of Attica, and was brought up at Athens. On his father's side he was descended from King Codrus; on his mother's, he was related to Pisistratus, of whom we shall have occasion to speak further on. Much of his early life was devoted to philosophical and political studies, and he travelled as a merchant over various parts of Greece and Asia, as well as into Egypt. The incidents of his career present certain points of similarity to what is related of Lycurgus; and it is possible that some degree of fiction has entered into the accounts of both. In other respects, however, the distinction is sufficiently clear. Solon was a man of larger intellect and more varied culture than the Spartan lawgiver. In his youth he had been a poet, and this gave to his mind a power of active sympathy with the needs and capacities of human nature, which saved him from the hard and narrow routine of Lycurgus. His entry into political life arose out of a war between Athens and Megara for the possession of Salamis. The island once belonged to Athens, but afterwards revolted to Megara, and asserted itself with so much vigour that the Athenians, having made repeated attempts to reconquer it, were obliged to confess their inability. They even declared it an offence punishable with death to propose any further expedition. But Solon, though himself a native of Salamis, was dissatisfied with this relinquishment of what he conceived to be a national right, and, spreading a report that he was mad, he suddenly appeared in the market-place with every sign of frenzy, and recited a poem full of bitter reproaches against his countrymen for the mean and cowardly spirit they had exhibited. Such, at least, is the story related by Plutarch; but the device seems unworthy of so great a man, and trenches somewhat too closely on the heroics of burlesque. It would appear, however, that Solon really procured a reversal of the previous decision not to make any fresh attempt to subdue Salamis. He was appointed to the command of an expedition, and, in a single campaign, which is believed to have been in the year 600 B.C., drove the Megarians out of the island. The latter did not accept their ill-fortune, but continued the struggle until it was resolved to refer the matter to the arbitration of Sparta, when the decision was given in favour of Athens, about 597 B.C.

When Solon was conducting his victorious campaign in Salamis, he was probably thirty-eight years of age. It was four years later than this (viz., in 596 B.C.) that Epimenides visited Athens, and it is thought that the terms of intimacy existing between him and Solon inclined the Athenian aristocracy to place in the hands of the latter a reconstruction of the laws. A reform of some kind was imperatively required. The nobles and men of wealth, who inhabited the cities and the plains, oppressed the needy peasants who cultivated the hilly districts in the north and east of Attica, while the mercantile dwellers on the coast occupied a middle position between the two, and endeavoured, but ineffectually, to reconcile their conflicting interests. The poor were in a condition of extreme wretchedness. Having borrowed money of the wealthy, and being in numerous instances unable to pay either principal or interest, their

* "One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretans are always liars, evil beasts," &c.—Paul to Titus, i. 12.

persons as well as their fields were seized, and many were reduced to slavery on their own lands, or sold to foreign masters. The republic had reached a state bordering an anarchy when, in 594 B.C., Solon was chosen archon and sovereign legislator. Those who elected him were of course the nobles, for they were the only class which possessed any political powers That they should have conferred so important a function on one who was known to entertain popular views, will appear strange; but they may have seen the necessity of conceding something to the general demand, and may perhaps have doubted whether the new archon would make such radical changes as he ultimately effected. In Solon, moreover, all saw the aims and conduct of an honest man. He was free from personal ambition, and his desire to serve the commonwealth was beyond dispute.

The first measure of Solon was one cancelling all contracts by which the land or person of a debtor had been given as security. The mortgaged lands were released, and returned to their owners. Enslaved citizens were restored to freedom, and means were provided for bringing back from foreign countries all who had been sold to distant masters. This would seem to have been done at the expense of those who had sold them; and if so, it is impossible to allege anything against the justice of such a provision. All loans in which the person of the debtor was pledged as security were thenceforward forbidden; but, as some compensation to the rich for the losses entailed on them, Solon lowered the standard of the coinage so that a hundred new drachmæ were worth no more than seventy-three of the old. Thus, by spreading the cost of these changes over the community generally, he effected the largest amount of good at the smallest sacrifice of individual interests. It is stated by some ancient writers that Solon cancelled all debts; but the fact appears doubtful, and a law of this nature could hardly have had any other than a disastrous effect, such as does not appear to have ensued from the measures actually carried out. The ordinances of Solon were for the most part received with satisfaction, and sacrifices were offered to the gods in thanksgiving for what was regarded as a happy revolution.

These, however, were social reforms, and Solon was next required to effect an improvement in the political constitution of Attica, and in the statutes by which it was governed. The sanguinary laws of Draco were repealed, excepting with respect to murder, which still remained a capital offence. The citizens were classified in accordance with the amount of their possessions, for the basis of the new constitution was to be property, instead of birth. Wealth, rather than ancestry, formed the new title to honours and offices; and, although this did not at first effect any sweeping or radical change, since the nobles were undoubtedly the richest men in the republic, it introduced a wider and more liberal spirit into the governing system, and opened the door to still greater modifications in the future. The people were now distributed into four classes, determined by the property they held, which was subjected to a precise assessment. Three of these classes were required to pay an income-tax in proportion to the amount of their receipts. The members of the first class were taxed according to the full value of their estates. Those of the second class were rated at one-sixth less than the value of their property, those of the third at one-third less; and this, apparently, on the ground that these classes had fewer political rights than the highest. The fourth class, as being too poor, was exempt from any form of direct taxation, but was none the less admitted to the right of voting in the popular Assembly, and to the exercise of judicial powers. The chief offices of the State could be filled only by the members of the first class; but inferior posts were held by those of the second and third classes, who were liable to military service, either as horsemen or as heavy-armed infantry. From the hired labourers who formed the fourth class, and who were excluded from all public offices, were derived the light-armed infantry of the armies, and subsequently the sailors who manned the fleets. To the popular Assembly belonged the right of electing the archons and other national officers, and the archons were made accountable to that body at the termination of their year of office.

The general effect of these changes was to relieve the poor from cruel and excessive burdens, and at the same time to place in their hands a degree of political power which, while it still left a fair amount of influence to wealth and station, permitted the humble to protect themselves in future from the evils they had suffered in the past. The tendency of the new legislation was undoubtedly towards democratical predominance; but it did not suddenly place in the hands of the needy and ignorant an influence which their previous lives disqualified them from exercising. It rather prepared the commonalty for the absolute control of the State at some future day than immediately invested them with the right of so controlling it. The older Senate was supplanted by another, which was sometimes called the Council of Four Hundred, and of which the principal

duties were to mature matters for discussion at the popular Assembly, to preside at its meetings, and to carry its resolutions into effect. It was, in fact, a sort of standing committee of the popular Assembly, by which it was annually elected, and to which it was accountable. No subject could be originated in the assembly of the people: it was for the Senate to introduce whatever laws or other topics were considered ripe for discussion before the democratical body. This was a very necessary provision; for the Assembly was not a representative chamber, such as exists in most countries at the present day, but was actually a gathering of the people themselves, in which every citizen, to whatever class he belonged, had the right both of speaking and of voting. In so large and miscellaneous an assemblage, the origination of measures would have been difficult and unadvisable. An unorganised mass may discuss and determine, but cannot well initiate. The Senate, therefore—which consisted of the manageable number of four hundred, in the proportion of one hundred to each of the four ancient tribes, whose constitution was left undisturbed—digested the vague sentiments of the larger body into definite forms of legislation, and presented them to that body for acceptance, rejection, or modification. The judicial powers of the popular Assembly were more important than its legislative functions; for a certain number of citizens were chosen every year by lot to form a supreme court of justice, to which appeals were made from the sentences of the magistrates.

The private as well as the public lives of citizens were regulated by Solon, though not with such minuteness, nor in such a spirit of despotic interference, as prevailed in Sparta under the laws of Lycurgus. The education of the young, and the conduct of women, were ordered by the Athenian legislator, and he made various edicts for the encouragement of trade and manufactures. The idle and profligate were punished, after due inquiry; and a son was not obliged to support his father in old age, if in his youth he had been left uninstructed in some trade or other occupation. A thief was compelled to restore double the value of the property he had stolen. Large rewards were bestowed upon the victors in the Olympian and Isthmian Games, where formerly the prize had consisted of nothing more than a simple wreath; but this was an alteration of doubtful wisdom. Foreigners were invited to settle in Athens by the promise of valuable privileges—an ordinance which must have been somewhat offensive to the Greek pride of race, but which was calculated to enrich the Hellenic population with new elements, and to extend the circle of its knowledge and its sympathies. Another admirable regulation of this great reformer was that which forbade the speaking evil either of the dead or of the living. At the same time, public spirit was fostered by an enactment to the effect that any man who in a civil sedition took part with neither side should be dishonoured and disfranchised.

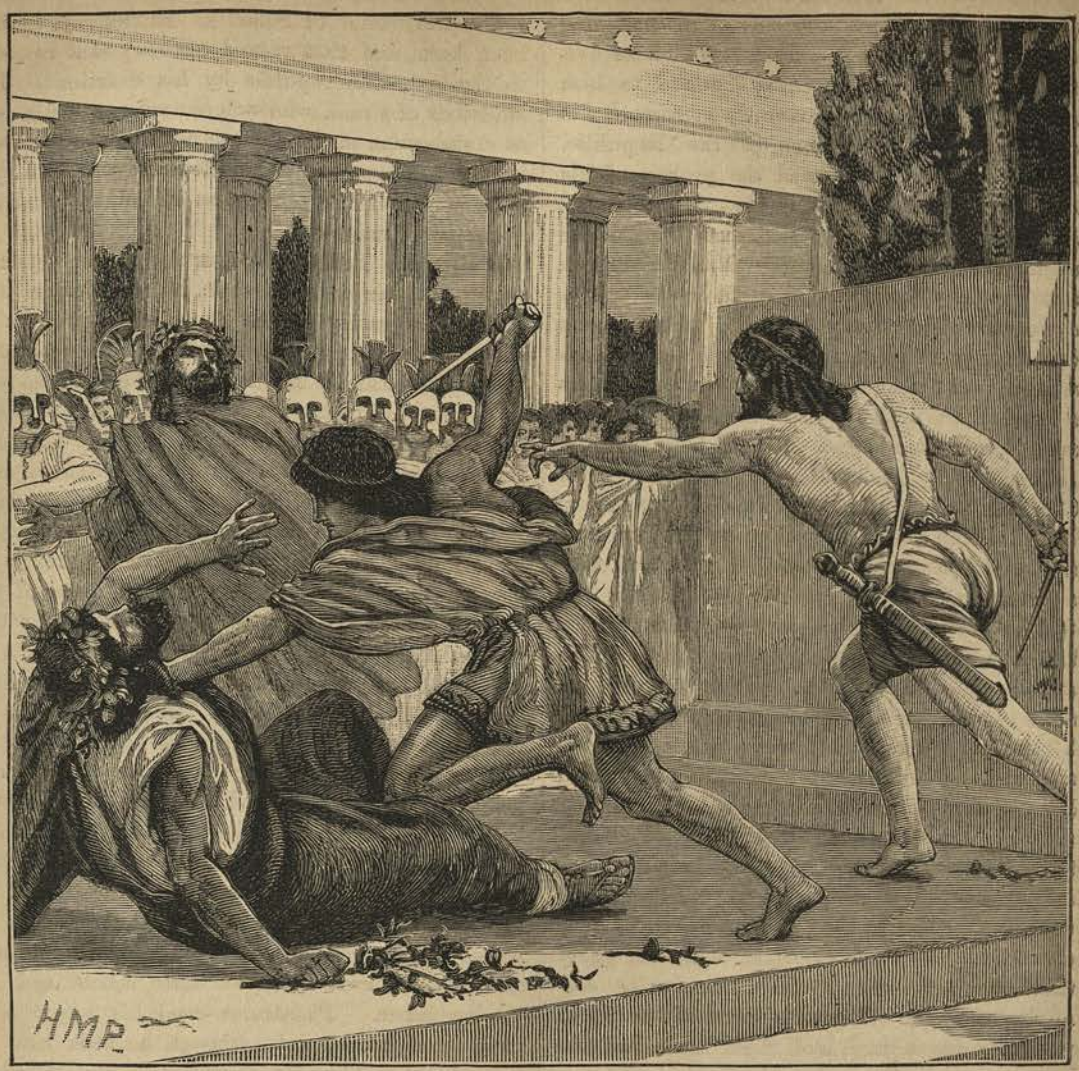
The work of legislation being at length complete, Solon adopted measures for perpetuating a knowledge of what he had decreed. His laws were inscribed on wooden tablets, combined into the form of pyramidal blocks, which turned upon an axis. These were at first kept in the Acropolis, but afterwards in the Prytaneum, or town-hall. Plutarch states that Solon intended his enactments to remain in force for only a century; but it seems improbable that he should have formed any definite design with respect to a matter which could have been reasonably determined only as the necessity for change became apparent. Solon was aware that his laws were far from perfect; but he wisely adapted them to what he believed to be the capacity of the Athenian citizens in his own day. Above all things, he was desirous that the experiment should have a fair trial, and he therefore bound the government and people by a solemn oath to observe his institutions for at least ten years. To avoid the importunities of those who were constantly requiring amendments, he asked permission to leave Athens for that period, and on quitting Greece visited Egypt, Cyprus, and Asia Minor. He is said to have made the acquaintance of Crœsus while in Lydia, and to have addressed to him that observation on the mutability of human fortune which Crœsus afterwards recollected when on the pyre which was to consume him. The story, however, cannot be reconciled with chronology, and must therefore be banished to the vague but beautiful realm of tradition and fantasy.

Fresh dissensions amongst the three classes of the Athenian population—viz., the highlanders, the men of the plain, and the men of the coast—broke out during the absence of Solon. The leader of the mountain population was Pisistratus, the cousin of Solon, and by far the most powerful of these warring chiefs. The mountaineers were the poorest of the three classes, and Pisistratus, who was an ambitious man, gifted with military abilities and a persuasive tongue, espoused their cause, in the hope of making himself absolute over the State. Solon found the country in a condition of the utmost disturbance when he returned there,

about 562 B.C. He endeavoured to reconcile the heads of the several parties, and to dissuade his kinsman from pursuing the designs which he evidently entertained. Pisistratus listened to him with apparent respect, but secretly continued his attempt upon the institutions of the Republic. Solon then publicly denounced the project of his relative; but Pisistratus had by that time gathered to himself so numerous a body of partisans that he occupied a position of command, such as the veteran legislator could not rival. Nevertheless, a stratagem was found necessary to bring matters to a crisis. One day, Pisistratus entered the market-place in a chariot, and called attention to the fact that he and his mules were wounded in several places. Those wounds had in truth been inflicted by himself; but he told the excited crowd that he had been nearly killed in defending their rights. Through the agency of one of his friends, he requested the appointment of a guard of fifty mace-bearers, who should protect his life from the plots of his enemies. Solon perceived that a body such as this might be easily employed against the constitution which he had taken such pains to establish; and therefore resisted the proposal with the utmost energy. He was outvoted, however; the guard was sanctioned and formed; and Pisistratus soon discovered pretexts for increasing its number, until he found at his disposal a force sufficiently strong to seize the Acropolis.

The revolution was effected in 560 B.C., and proved a death-blow to the opposite factions. The Alcmæonidæ, who were identified with the party of the Shore, left Athens without daring to continue the struggle. The adherents of the Plain were equally discomfited, and Solon alone had the courage to oppose the usurpation now nearly accomplished by his cousin. He exhorted the people to drag down the pretender; but the majority were evidently disposed to give Pisistratus a trial. They declined to adopt the advice of their lawgiver, and events marched on to their fulfilment. It was feared that Solon might suffer from the vengeance of the popular dictator, and he was advised to fly. This he refused to do, and, being asked on what he relied for protection, answered, with touching simplicity, "On my old age." Pisistratus, whose power might have enabled him to act with any extreme of severity, behaved with kindness to his famous relative, and even sought his counsel in the conduct of affairs. Solon is said to have given him the fruits of his wisdom and long experience; but his public life was now at an end, and it is probable that he died soon after, in 559 B.C., at about eighty years of age. Tradition affirms that, by his own directions, his ashes were scattered round the island of Salamis. In Salamis he had been born, and that valued territory was restored to the Athenian republic by his exertions. The affections of a man who was almost as much a poet as a statesman may therefore not unnaturally have turned, as the sunset of his life drew near, to a spot associated with the tenderness of infancy, and the triumphs of manhood.

Pisistratus held his power by a very uneasy tenure. After a little while, he was driven into exile by Megacles of the Shore and Lycurgus of the Plain, who united their forces for that purpose. The combination, which lasted well enough as long as it remained in the aggressive stage, fell to pieces as soon as the usurper was removed. Megacles then invited Pisistratus to return to Athens, and, on his doing so, gave him his daughter in marriage. A fresh quarrel soon arose, owing to the neglect of his wife by Pisistratus, who regarded her with dread, as belonging to the accursed race of the Alcmæonidæ. To avenge his daughter for this affront, Megacles once more joined his forces with those of Lycurgus, and Pisistratus was again compelled to fly from Athens. During an exile of ten years, he formed alliances in various parts of Greece, and obtained the assistance of men and money. Thus strengthened, he sailed from Eretria, in Eubœa, where he had been staying, and landed at Marathon, where large numbers flocked to his camp. His own energy, and the hesitation of his opponents, gave him a complete victory when his forces encountered those of Megacles and Lycurgus; and thenceforward the dictator maintained his predominance. Pisistratus used his power with great moderation, and, although he took into his pay a body of Thracian mercenaries, and seized as hostages the children of those whom he suspected, his rule was that of a benevolent despot, a patron of the arts, and an encourager of all employments which might advance the prosperity of the people. He required of the citizens no other payment than an income-tax of five per cent. The institutions of Solon were upheld; and, being on one occasion accused of murder, Pisistratus appeared in person before the Areopagus to meet his accuser, who did not dare to confront him. Athens was indebted to this ruler for splendid temples and other public buildings, as well as for a system of water-supply derived from the fountain Callirrhoë. He brought together a large library, to which the general public had access, and the collection of the Homeric poems has been attributed to him. His death took place in 527 B.C., and the power he had established was transmitted to his sons.



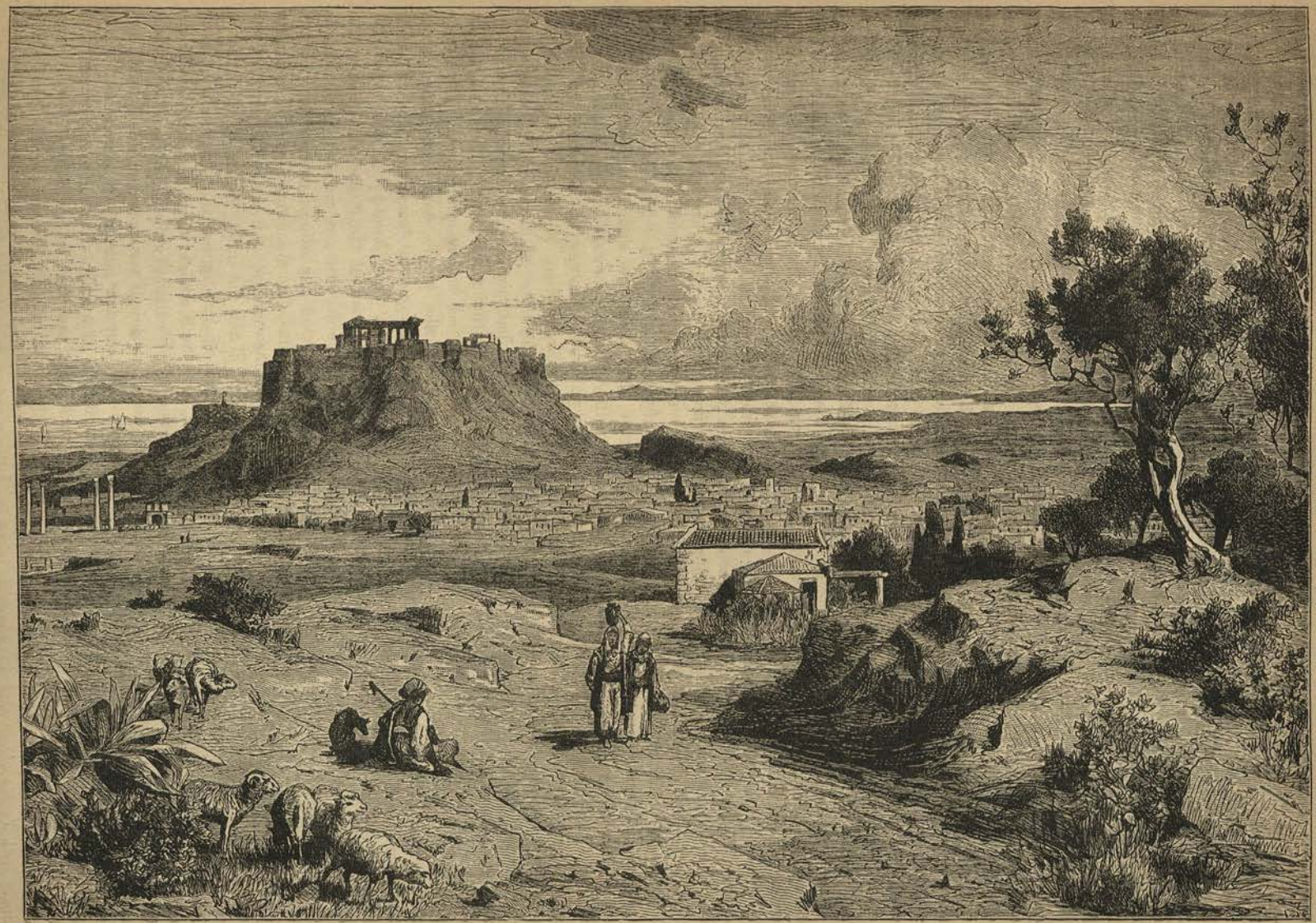
SLAUGHTER OF PISISTRATIDÆ.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ATHENS AND THE GREEK COLONIES.

Government of Hippias and Hipparchus—Conspiracy of Aristogiton and Harmodius—Severe Government of Hippias after the Assassination of his Brother—Invasion of Attica by the Spartans, and Expulsion of the Pisistratidæ—Reforms of Clisthenes—The Athenian Constitution made more Democratical—Institution of Ostracism—Expulsion and Return of Clisthenes—Attacks by Sparta and her Allies on Athens—General Condition of Greece at the Close of the Sixth Century B.C.—Extent and Importance of the Hellenic Colonies—System of Colonisation—Settlements in Southern Italy, or Magna Græcia—Sybaris, Croton, and Tarentum—Aboriginal Population of Southern Italy and Sicily—Syracuse and Agrigentum—Greek Settlements in Gaul and Spain—Other Greek Colonies—Founding of Byzantium—The Greek Spirit of Freedom a New Example to the World—Earlier Developments of Greek Literature, Philosophy, and Art.

It must have seemed to many, after the death of Pisistratus, as if Athens would take rank for a considerable period among the so-called Tyrannies which had been established in various parts of Greece, and in some had lasted through several generations. The personal qualities of the cousin of Solon, his relationship to the great lawgiver, and the unquestionable services which he had



ATHENS

rendered to the commonwealth, created so strong a sentiment in his favour that, on his removal from the scene, his two sons, Hippias and Hipparchus, succeeded to power without any difficulty. They conducted the government upon the same principles as those which had shaped the administration of Pisistratus. Hipparchus, in particular, was a patron of letters, at whose court the poets Anacreon and Simonides were entertained. Both the brothers seem to have been wise, tolerant, and liberal rulers, and it would appear that there was a very general disposition to accept their supremacy, as ensuring a political condition which was at any rate far better than the selfishness of oligarchy, or the rage of tumult. But in truth the Athenians were not to remain long under the dominion of personal rule, and an unexpected incident hastened the arrival of a catastrophe which, perhaps, could not under any circumstances have been much delayed.

An intimate friendship existed between Aristogiton, an Athenian citizen of middle rank, and a youth named Harmodius. Both are supposed to have been remotely of Phœnician origin, and it is possible that they were allied to one another in blood, though distantly. Hipparchus endeavoured to divert the friendship of Harmodius from Aristogiton to himself, and, being unsuccessful, took his revenge by putting a public affront on the youth's sister, whom, after inviting her to take part in a religious procession, as bearer of one of the sacred vessels, he dismissed before the people, as unworthy of such an office. The resentment both of Aristogiton and Harmodius was now thoroughly aroused, and they resolved to put the dictator to death. It is said that Aristogiton had already conceived, on purely abstract and political grounds, a design of upsetting the government of the Pisistratidæ; but it is more likely that his motives were personal. At any rate, they were intensified by personal feelings, and it was these, unquestionably, which spurred on the two friends to immediate action. Being promised the support of a few acquaintances to whom they confided the plan, they determined to make their attempt on the festival of the Great Panathenæa, instituted in honour of Minerva, the tutelary diety of Athens. On this occasion, all the citizens were required to attend with their spears and shields, and to march in procession to the temple of the goddess. The festival offered the only opportunity, during times of peace, when the Athenians could assemble armed, and was therefore selected by the conspirators as enabling them to pursue their design without suspicion. The day having arrived, the two friends went to the place of meeting, armed not merely with swords, which they were entitled to wear openly, but with daggers wreathed in myrtle-boughs, which effectually concealed the weapons, and which it was usual to bear in the sacred procession. It had been arranged that Hippias should be slain first; but, as one of the conspirators was observed talking to the dictator, it was feared that the plot had been betrayed, and Aristogiton and Harmodius, rushing tumultuously towards the spot where Hipparchus was engaged in some religious rites, at once despatched him. Immediately afterwards, Harmodius was killed by the surrounding guards, and Aristogiton, after escaping for awhile, was taken prisoner, subjected to severe tortures to make him disclose his accomplices, and ultimately put to death.

In subsequent ages, the names of Aristogiton and Harmodius were honoured as those of martyrs to the principle of Tyrannicide. Their deed was made the subject of numerous popular ballads, which celebrated the virtues of "the sword in myrtle dressed," and a good deal of very questionable sentiment was wasted on two heroes whose motives were certainly not of the highest, and whose action was unattended by the results commonly attributed to it. Hippias and Hipparchus were not tyrants in the really bad sense of the word. They had ruled with moderation and equity; and, although the conduct of Hippias seems to have been capricious and unfair with respect to the sister of Harmodius, the matter was one which had nothing to do with the political condition of the community. The sons of Pisistratus governed in accordance with the laws of Solon, and the people were represented in the Senate and the general Assembly. The law-making power was in their hands; it was merely the executive function of the State which was wielded by the brothers, who are universally admitted to have conducted the administration in a fair and liberal spirit. On the other hand, it is obvious that private revenge, and not public devotion, was the chief, if not the only, incentive which nerved the arms of Aristogiton and Harmodius. Moreover, any evil which may have existed in the system of government upheld by the Pisistratidæ—a system, we should remember, originally established with the popular consent—was increased by the murder of Hipparchus; and it was not until four years later, and then by a wholly different agency, that personal rule at Athens was abolished. Yet the poetical interpretation of the story of Aristogiton and Harmodius has surrounded the vicious principle

of Tyrannicide with a misleading halo, which lasts even to the present day.

The assassination of Hipparchus excited the fears as well as the resentment of his brother, whose conduct as a ruler was thenceforward characterised by a rigour which had before been entirely absent. The plot of Aristogiton and Harmodius seems to have broken out in 514 B.C., thirteen years after the death of Pisistratus; and from that date to 510 B.C. Hippias acted towards the people with great severity, putting several to death, and imposing extraordinary taxes on all. Apparently fearing that he would at length be expelled, he courted the friendship of Darius, the great King of Persia; and it was not long ere his apprehensions proved correct. The Alcmæonidæ, who had long dwelt in exile, believed that they might now safely return to Attica, and that, being there, they could avail themselves of the popular discontent which had by this time undoubtedly arisen. They seized a fortified town upon the frontier, and defied the utmost power of Hippias, but, being defeated in an encounter with the despot's army, were compelled to fly. Their cause, however, was far from desperate. For some time past, the Alcmæonidæ had been great patrons of the Oracle at Delphi; and it happened, whenever the Spartans consulted the priestess of Apollo, that they were told, "Athens must be liberated." Although the Spartans had previously been on friendly terms with the Pisistratidæ, they began to consider that a divine injunction had been laid upon them to restore the more republican form of government at Athens, in which, however, they, as monarchists, could have felt little interest. Two attempts to effect this purpose were made soon afterwards by the forces of Lacedæmon. The first was an entire failure; the second resulted in the overthrow of Hippias and his Thessalian allies in 510 B.C. To obtain the release of his children, who had been taken prisoners, the dictator voluntarily quitted the Acropolis, which he might easily have held against his enemies, and sailed for Sigeum, in the Troad, a dependency of Athens which had been won by Pisistratus.

The head of the Alcmæonidæ at this time was Clisthenes, the son of Megacles, who had been concerned in the massacre of the followers of Cylon before the altar where they had taken refuge. It was to Clisthenes that the Athenian citizens were mainly indebted for obtaining the help of Sparta, and, on the Lacedæmonians vacating the city of Athens, he endeavoured to seize the leading position. Meeting with resistance from the great body of the nobles, he saw the necessity of throwing himself on popular support. To propitiate the mass of the people was no very difficult matter, and, being still further strengthened by a response of the Delphic Oracle, which appears to have been much under the influence of his gifts, he procured authority to reform the political constitution of Attica in a democratic spirit. In the first place, he distributed the population of Athens into ten tribes, and conferred the rights of citizenship on all freemen, instead of leaving it, as formerly, the exclusive privilege of the four Ionic tribes. Even resident aliens and emancipated slaves were included in the new order, and the tribes were divided into cantons or townships, called demes. Each of these subdivisions administered its local affairs under the supervision of the demarchus, or chief officer, who was elected by the people. The number of members of the Senate was advanced from four hundred to five hundred, and the body received from Clisthenes greater powers than it had before possessed. Its sittings were made permanent, and its duties divided among ten committees of fifty members each, who served by turns. The division of the Attic year corresponded to the number of these committees, and the word Prytany was equally applied to both.

The assembly of the people, which received the name of Ecclesia, met more frequently than under the constitution of Solon. The archons were elected as formerly, but much of their power was transferred to the Senate and the Ecclesia. With the third archon, who occupied the position of chief commander of the army, were associated ten generals, elected annually by the people, and called Strategi, to whom pertained, not merely the direction of affairs in war, but the management of foreign relations generally. Thus, the First Strategus was virtually the head of the State, and enjoyed an amount of power which placed him almost on the footing of a king, though of a king chosen only for a short period, and with functions defined by law. The judicial privileges of the people were augmented, though it is not absolutely certain that it was Clisthenes who decreed that all public crimes should be tried by the whole body of citizens above thirty years of age. The general effect of the reforms introduced by this statesman was undoubtedly to increase the rights of the people in a marked degree; yet the new institutions were not entirely democratic. An aristocratic element still remained, and was eliminated only at a later date.

One of the most remarkable of the new provisions against tyranny was that which has been familiar to all succeeding times as Ostracism. This

was a power, resident in the people themselves, by which, without any specific accusation or trial, a man suspected of a desire to make himself absolute could be removed from Athens for a period of ten years, which was afterwards reduced to five. The person so banished, however, could at any time be recalled, if it was considered expedient; and he could return to Athens as a matter of right at the end of the term, without loss of property or of political privilege. The method of working this law was peculiar. In the first place, the Senate and the Ecclesia declared, at a fixed period of the year, that an ostracism was necessary, but without mentioning any name. The matter then went to the popular vote, which was given by each citizen writing on an oyster-shell or tile (whence the word *ostracism*) the name of the person who seemed to him dangerous to the liberties of the Republic. These were deposited in urns set up within an enclosed part of the market-place, under the superintendence of the archons and other officials, who ultimately counted the votes. It was necessary that the gross number should not be less than six thousand, for otherwise there was no ostracism. In the event of that condition being fulfilled, the numbers with respect to each individual were next ascertained; and the person against whom was found the largest number of votes was sentenced to be banished, and lay under the necessity of departing within ten days. The system was doubtless arbitrary, but may have been required as the only means of protecting the commonwealth from the inroads of irregular ambition. It was at any rate surrounded by as many safeguards as such a proceeding admitted; it implied no disgrace, being in truth a testimony to superior powers, or to higher virtue; it entailed no permanent injury; and it could at any time be rescinded.

Although Clisthenes was able to effect these reforms, he was much exposed to the jealousy of the nobles, and, headed by Isagoras, they determined on his ruin. Being too weak to bring about such a result without assistance, they sought the help of the Spartans, who, repenting of the aid they had recently given to the Alcmæonidæ, and perhaps discovering the fraud of the Delphic Oracle, demanded the expulsion of the reformer, as one of a family which had been pronounced accursed on account of their sacrilege. Clisthenes feared to oppose this mandate, and accordingly left the city, from which the Lacedæmonians afterwards drove out no fewer than seven hundred families. Their proceedings so far were patiently endured by the Athenian people, who probably had no great regard for the Alcmæonidæ; but when the Spartan king, Cleomenes, endeavoured to introduce radical changes into the Athenian constitution, a serious insurrection broke out, and Cleomenes, together with Isagoras, retired into the Acropolis. The Lacedæmonian force accompanying the king was but small; the nobles had scarcely any supporters; and a few days saw the populace triumphant. Cleomenes, Isagoras, and the Spartan soldiers, were permitted to leave the country in peace; their adherents, however, were slain; and Clisthenes was then recalled, with the seven hundred families which had recently been exiled. But, although once more at the head of affairs, Clisthenes feared the greater power of Sparta, and thought it prudent to solicit the goodwill of Persia. It would have been granted, had the Athenians consented to make submission to the Great King by sending earth and water. Their self-respect, however, refused so great an ignominy, and the contemplated alliance was broken off.

A combination of the Peloponnesian States, to be aided by a simultaneous movement on the part of the Thebans, and of the Chalcidians of Eubœa, was afterwards formed by Sparta for the overthrow of Athens. The Peloponnesian army entered Attica in 508 B.C., under the joint command of the two sovereigns of Lacedæmon, Cleomenes and Demaratus, and penetrated as far as Eleusis; but here an unexpected catastrophe ensued. It would seem that some at least of the allies must have entered into their engagement without being fully apprised of what they were required to perform. When, therefore, it became known to them that their arms would be employed to slay the liberties of Athens, the wickedness of the design induced a general feeling of disgust. The Corinthians, in particular, were loud in their opposition to such a project; the spirit of disaffection spread; and at last the Spartan king, Demaratus, was found in opposition to his colleague. Thus abandoned, Cleomenes perceived that he had no choice but to lead his forces back, and relinquish the attempt. Athens was delivered from a grave peril, and she resolved to chastise the bad faith of the Thebans and Chalcidians. Both were thoroughly defeated, and the Athenians, establishing their power in the insular territory of Eubœa, distributed the estates of the Chalcidian landowners among four hundred of their own needy citizens, who settled in the country. But Cleomenes had not yet given up all hope of subjecting the free communities of Attica. Hippias was summoned from Sigeum to Sparta in 505 B.C., with a view to re-establishing his power over the Athenians; but, at a conference of delegates from the allied States, the Corinthians again

opposed the design with so indignant an eloquence that the expedition was abandoned. Hippias, finding his hopes destroyed, returned to Sigeum, whence he afterwards removed to Lampsacus (a city of Mysia, in Asia Minor), and ultimately to the court of Persia. In his old age, he re-entered Greece with the army sent by Darius, and perished at the great defeat of Marathon.

At the close of the sixth century B.C., Historic Greece had received its full development, and assumed those forms with which we are all familiar in connection with well-known events. Sparta was still the predominant State; but Athens was gradually rising into the position of importance which she afterwards magnificently filled. The Peloponnesus, though distributed amongst several governments, owned the Spartan leadership in most of its political relations. In the northern division of Greece there was as yet no leading power; but Athens, as the ruling city of all Attica, and as possessing a population of remarkable versatility and intellectual brilliance, was regarded either with respect or jealousy. Bœotia contained fourteen independent cities, forming a confederacy, with Thebes at the head. Thebes gave its support to the aristocratical party in the other Greek States, but in this respect was strongly opposed by Platæa, one of the cities of the Theban league, the inhabitants of which upheld the cause of Athens, under circumstances which we shall hereafter have occasion to relate. The smaller States north of Attica need not be particularly described; but the cities of Ætolia, lying towards the western side of Greece, acquired an important position at a later age, as antagonists of the famous Achæan League. Ætolia, Western Locris, Thessaly, and Acarnania, were peopled by races only partly of Hellenic origin, while the Epirotes were considered as little better than barbarians. Of the islands in the vicinity of Attica, the largest was Eubœa; the most important, Ægina. Between Ægina and Athens a long-standing feud existed; and when the Thebans were defeated by the Athenians, in 506 B.C., they applied to Ægina for assistance. The Æginetans were so eager to render aid that they made a descent on Attica without any previous declaration of war. No details of this proceeding have been preserved; but it would seem that, after committing some ravages, the Æginetans were compelled to retreat.

Hellas was not so much a geographical as an ethnological term. From an early age the Greeks were a colonising people, and their race, their language, and their institutions, were scattered far and wide over a large portion of the known world. Greeks were to be found along the shores of the Euxine, in the southern parts of Sarmatia (now included in the Russian Empire), on the northern coast of Africa, in Egypt, in Asia Minor, in Sicily, in Italy, in the south of Gaul, and in other places. All these colonies were regarded as forming integral parts of Hellas, and the citizen of Athens or of Lacedæmon was not more thoroughly a Greek in the general estimation than these descendants of the common stock who had planted themselves in distant regions. The Grecian colonies were for the most part gathered about the Mediterranean, which thus acquired almost the character of a Greek lake; but they were not entirely confined to that body of waters. When the people of a particular city determined on forming a settlement in some foreign land, the enterprise was conducted under the direction of leaders appointed by the parent State; but, when once established, the colony was considered perfectly independent in its internal government and its external relations. As a matter of sentiment and affection, however, the old ties remained unbroken. The gods of the mother city were worshipped in the new settlement. The sacred fire of the younger community was derived from that of the older. The traditions of the one were cherished with filial reverence by the other, and the great religious festivals of the race were held in common. When, in turn, a new colony was formed out of an earlier settlement, a leader was chosen from the city whence the first colony had proceeded. Thus, a very close bond of union, though wholly unassociated with political sovereignty, existed between a parent State and its descendants. This feeling did not invariably prevent the breaking out of war amongst members of one family; but it rendered such wars unusual, and encouraged a sentiment which inclined men, even in martial times, to regard such struggles as fratricidal and accursed.

The earliest of the Grecian colonies were those of Asia Minor, the foundation and general disposition of which have been already described. In Sicily, and in the south of Italy, numerous Greek settlements were commenced soon after the First Olympiad, which, as previously stated, was in 776 B.C.; but one appears to have begun much earlier than this. Cumæ, situated near Cape Misenum, on the Tyrrhenian Sea, is said to have been founded as far back as 1050 B.C., and to have been formed by emigrants from Cyme, in Asia, and Chalcis, in Eubœa. In 735 B.C. Naxos, the earliest of the Greek settlements in Sicily, was founded on the eastern coast of that island, not far from Mount Ætna. Syracuse, Agrigentum, and

other flourishing cities, speedily succeeded to Naxos; and the Hellenic communities of Sicily, and of the Italian peninsula, became in time so celebrated that in some respects they eclipsed the cities of Greece itself. Indeed, the southern part of Italy was called Magna Græcia, as being indicative of superiority. Its cities were larger, more populous, and more wealthy, than Athens, Corinth, Thebes, or Ægina. Its merchants were known all over the world; and while Sybaris (founded in 720 B.C.) became famous for its splendour and voluptuousness, Croton (which dated from 710) was celebrated for the excellence of its physicians and surgeons, and for being the city where Pythagoras settled, and taught that system of mystical philosophy which is associated with his name. A destructive war broke out between the republics of Sybaris and Croton in the latter part of the sixth century B.C. The nobles of Sybaris, who up to that time had retained the government in their own hands, were dispossessed by a popular insurrection, and a despotism was established in the person of a citizen named Telys. Five hundred of the exiled aristocracy sought refuge at Croton, and their surrender was demanded by Telys. This was refused by the Crotonians, acting, it is said, on the advice of Pythagoras; and, although their military force was greatly inferior to that of Sybaris, they succeeded—partly by the help of some Spartan auxiliaries—in defeating their opponents with immense slaughter, about 510 B.C. Sybaris was then utterly destroyed, and in 443 B.C. the Athenians founded Thurii near its site. The citizens of Locri, at the south-eastern extremity of Italy, are said to have been the first Hellenic people who possessed a written body of laws. These laws appear to have been as sanguinary as those of Draco; but they were established forty years earlier than the better-known code at Athens. Tarentum was a colony from Sparta, founded about 708 B.C. Being seated at the head of the Gulf of Tarentum, it was admirably situated for commerce, and its inhabitants, becoming rich and luxurious, entirely lost those characteristics for which their Spartan ancestors were famous. The city maintained its independence until conquered by the Romans, and, after the destruction of Sybaris, was the most powerful republic in Magna Græcia.

When the Grecian colonists entered Southern Italy—originally known to the Hellenes as Hesperia, the land of the Evening Star, and associated with the golden reign of Saturn—they found that region inhabited by semi-barbarian tribes, of Pelasgian origin, and therefore to some extent allied in blood to themselves. These were pressed back from the coast towards the agricultural districts in the inner parts of the peninsula; for the Greek settlers always congregated in cities, and loved to plant those cities upon the margin of the sea, the neighbourhood of which enabled them to acquire wealth by commerce, and to indulge the spirit of adventure. The native population of Sicily consisted of the Sicani and the Siculi,—barbarous tribes, of Iberian and Italian origin, from whom the island was first called Sicania, and afterwards Sicilia. These also were driven inland; but on the western coast were some Carthaginian settlements, which maintained their independence, although ultimately the greater part of the Sicilian territory acquired an Hellenic character. Syracuse was founded by the Corinthians in 734 B.C., and rapidly became so prosperous that the circuit of its walls is stated to have been more than twenty-two miles, and its population to have reached 500,000. Two capacious harbours, separated from each other by the island of Ortygia, gave the Syracusans every opportunity for commerce, of which they so amply availed themselves that its inhabitants became noted for their opulence, and the city for its splendour. Theocritus and Archimedes were natives of Syracuse, so that the city has an illustrious place in the history both of poetry and science. Agrigentum was built by the Dorians of Gela in the year 582 B.C. The government, originally monarchical, was disgraced by the tyrannies of Phalaris, the commencement of whose reign is believed to have been about 507 B.C. It is related of this despot that he burnt several persons alive in a brazen bull, which was afterwards carried by Hamilcar to Carthage, and at a later age brought back to Agrigentum, when the great African city was taken by Scipio.

Phalaris was a powerful and often fortunate warrior; but the people of Agrigentum revolted in the tenth year of his reign, and put him to death with the same tortures as those which he had inflicted on many of his subjects. A republic was then established; but the government of the city underwent several other revolutions, and the Agrigentines suffered at various periods from the greater power of the Carthaginians and the Syracusans. The temples and other public buildings of Agrigentum were among the most magnificent of the ancient world, and the ruins of these structures are to the present day the most interesting in Sicily. Empedocles, a native of the city,

said that "the Agrigentines built as if they were to live for ever, and feasted as if they were to die to-morrow." The soil of the adjoining territory, which was cultivated by slave-labour, was celebrated for its extraordinary fertility in corn, wine, and oil, and the same character attaches to it still, together with the soft and seductive beauty which added to the charms of Agrigentum from the earliest ages of its existence.

As far towards the north-west as Gaul, the Greeks founded a settlement to which they gave the name of Massalia. It was the precursor of the modern Marseilles, and originated with a body of Ionic Phocæans, who went there in 600 B.C. The Massaliotes, like the other Greek colonists, were commercial in their pursuits, and established a navy which successfully encountered that of Carthage. The contact and example of these pioneers and their descendants sowed the first germs of civilisation among the neighbouring Celtic tribes; but in time the Massaliotes outgrew their settlement, and planted five others along the eastern coast of Spain. The African colonies of Cyrene and Barca, and the communities formed by the Greeks in Egypt, have already been noticed in these pages. Several Grecian colonies were settled at different times in Epirus, and in the neighbouring islands. The insular territory of Corcyra (now Corfu) acquired great wealth and importance in the hands of a body of Corinthians, who went there about 700 B.C. It was not long before this flourishing commonwealth excited the jealousy of the mother State, and a war took place which was signalized by the earliest naval fight on record. The Grecian cities in Macedonia and Thrace extended from the borders of Thessaly to the mouth of the Danube. The most celebrated of these was that of Byzantium, which began in 657 B.C., and was founded on the site of the more modern Constantinople. The settlers were Dorians from Megara, and, after the battle of Platæa, in 479 B.C., the commonwealth was reinforced by a mixed colony of Athenians and Lacedæmonians. This city of the Thracian Bosphorus became in time a great seat of commerce, and its situation has always been regarded as one of the most magnificent in the world, either for the purposes of trade, or for the designs of empire.

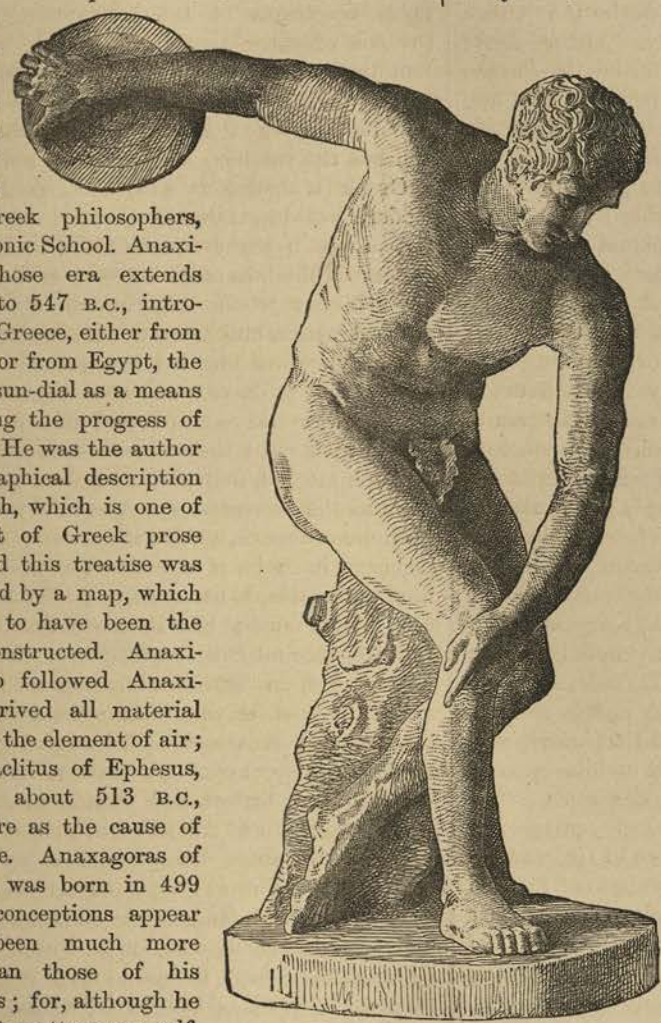
TEMPLE AT PÆSTUM, RESTORED.

The Greeks had presented a new example to the world in showing what men could do under conditions of freedom, and with the living forms of self-government. Previous to the rise of their small but vivid republics, the leading countries of the world had been military and sacerdotal despotisms, where multitudes of oppressed populations were subjected to the will of one man, and any iniquity could be perpetrated under the monstrous plea that it was "the king's pleasure." To the Greek belongs the immortal honour of declaring that no one is superior to the law, and that the law should be of the people's own making. It is true that he did not carry out this principle to the fullest extent, for a servile class existed side by side with the freeman. But the mere proclamation of such a doctrine, together with its partial realisation, was of inestimable service to Europe, and opened the way to developments of society far better than any that had gone before. Even the minute subdivision of the Greek nationality into a number of small commonwealths, many of them not much larger than the city after which they were named, had its advantages as well as its drawbacks. It made the establishment of a strong and permanent despotism very difficult; it trained a great number of persons in the art of self-government; and it quickened the national intellect by concentration round a variety of independent centres. All these circumstances helped to form a people of extraordinary capacity and power. Their freedom developed individual energy; their energy covered the seas with commerce, and dotted the shores and islands with communities devoted to liberty, and to the widest cultivation of the human spirit. The history of Greece is not merely the history of governments and of armies; it is also the history of literature, of philosophy, and of art.

The earliest literature of Greece was poetic, as it is in most countries; for in the infancy of nations, as in that of individuals, the imaginative element is stronger than the power of analysis and reason. Homer and Hesiod are the first authentic names which we encounter in the intellectual annals of Hellas; but these we have sufficiently considered in an earlier Chapter. The lyric poetry of the Greeks, though necessarily less important than the epic, exercised an immense influence over the popular mind, and has had a permanent effect upon the literature of modern nations. It arose in the earlier part of the seventh century before the Christian era, and was of course attended by a corresponding development in the art of music. Terpander of Lesbos was the inventor of the seven-stringed lyre, for before his time the instrument employed was a tetrachord, or lyre of four strings. At a still later date, an eighth string was added, and tradition ascribes this improvement to Pythagoras. The Dorians were great cultivators of lyric poetry, but it would appear that they borrowed the art, in the first instance, from the Ionian colonies of Asia Minor, which had also given the original impetus towards epic poetry. The many-stringed harp, and the flute, proceeded from the same artistic and intellectual race; but the lyric art was afterwards identified more with the Dorians than with any other member of the Hellenic nationality. The intimate union between poetry and music, as practised by the ancient Greeks, has been already pointed out; but this union was of course especially visible in lyric compositions. The songs of the Greeks excited to deeds of valour, or to the softer moods of love. They expressed in sublime forms the highest ideas of religion of which the race was capable; and they may be said to have permeated the whole nature of the people like a subtle and radiant fire. But for the most part they were not read in private; they were rather delivered in public to great congregations of listeners, accompanied by the swell of instrumental music, and the harmonious modulations of the voice. Some of these productions were choral; others were adapted to a single performer. Two of the greatest masters of the choral art were Simonides of Ceos, and Pindar of Thebes, who both lived in the sixth and fifth centuries B.C. Among the writers of odes for single performers were Alcæus, Sappho, and Anacreon. The two first flourished about the early part of the sixth century B.C.; the last-named, a little later. Satiré, moralising, and tender regret, also found expression in the Greek poetry of primitive times; but as yet the great triumphs of the drama were not achieved.

The faint beginnings of Greek philosophy are to be traced in the axioms of the Seven Sages, who are generally held to have been Solon, Thales, Pittacus, Periander, Cleobulus, Chilo, and Bias. The last of these, who was a native of Priene, in Asia Minor, lived as late as the period of the Persian conquest of Ionia, in 495 B.C. The maxims of these philosophers were, for the most part, practical expositions of what is chiefly conducive to success in life; but Thales appears to have indulged in abstract speculations on the nature of things. He taught that water, or fluid substance, was the one original element out of which all other bodies proceeded, and into which they would return. He had visited Egypt, and probably learned some of his principles in that ancient land, together with the knowledge of

geometry and astronomy with which he is credited. The solar eclipse which broke off the battle between Alyattes and Cyaxares is said to have been predicted by him; and, being a close observer of natural phenomena, he detected the singular power of attracting light bodies possessed by amber when rubbed, and thus placed in an electrical condition. He lived from 640 to 550 B.C., and is regarded as the founder of the first sect of Greek philosophers, called the Ionic School. Anaximander, whose era extends from 610 to 547 B.C., introduced into Greece, either from Babylonia or from Egypt, the use of the sun-dial as a means of indicating the progress of the hours. He was the author of a geographical description of the earth, which is one of the earliest of Greek prose works; and this treatise was accompanied by a map, which is believed to have been the first ever constructed. Anaximenes, who followed Anaximander, derived all material things from the element of air; while Heraclitus of Ephesus, who lived about 513 B.C., regarded fire as the cause of the universe. Anaxagoras of Clazomenæ was born in 499 B.C. His conceptions appear to have been much more exalted than those of his predecessors; for, although he taught that matter was self-existent, he asserted the presence of a Divine Mind, or Nous, which, acting upon chaos, reduced it to order, and formed intelligent beings, partaking of its own nature. This was an approach to Pantheism—a theory more distinctly developed by Xenophanes of Colophon, who identified the whole body of Nature with the Deity. In his estimation, the Homeric descriptions of the gods were abominable, and it is somewhat surprising that, in an age of religious bigotry, he should have escaped with no greater penalty than banishment from the colony of Elea, or Velia, a Greek settlement on the western coast of Southern Italy, whither he had fled after the conquest of Colophon by the Persians. The Eleatic school of philosophy was of his founding, and it was developed in the following century by Parmenides and Zeno.



GREEK ATHLETE THROWING THE DISCUS.

By far the most distinguished of the early Greek philosophers was Pythagoras, who was born at Samos about 580 B.C. Very little is known as to his life, and a vast amount of fable has supplied the place of authentic information. It appears certain, however, that in early manhood he visited Egypt, and it is not improbable that he travelled also in Phœnicia and Babylon. Returning to Samos at the age of forty, Pythagoras found his native island under the dominion of Polycrates, and in a state little adapted to the reception of abstruse and difficult problems, accompanied by a life of rigid self-denial. He therefore removed to Croton, in Magna Græcia, where he spent the greater part of his life, preaching a system which curiously blended religious enthusiasm with philosophical speculation. The exact nature of his views cannot now be ascertained, because he left behind him no written compositions. But, from what was afterwards declared to be the Pythagorean doctrine, it would seem that he taught the transmigration of souls from body to body, both of men and animals—a belief which he may have derived from the Egyptians; that he practised himself, and enjoined on his disciples, an ascetic purity of life; that he required of all novices that they should pass through a probationary discipline, in which they were to exercise themselves in the power of keeping silence; and that he refined upon the popular conceptions of religion, to which he gave a more mystical and exalted character. Astronomy, geometry, and arithmetic, were taught by Pythagoras with remarkable success, and he is said to

have held some abstruse ideas about numbers, which he regarded as regulating the whole constitution of the universe. Several of the chief families of Croton were enrolled in a Pythagorean brotherhood, which numbered three hundred members, counting only those who immediately surrounded the philosopher. The doctrines of Pythagoras spread rapidly through the Greek communities of Southern Italy. Other secret societies were formed in connection with the parent body, and the Three Hundred at Croton, who consisted chiefly of men belonging to the aristocratic classes, began in time to influence the conduct of public affairs. When, however, this masked and irresponsible brotherhood opposed the efforts of the popular party to obtain a share in the government, a revolution ensued, and a furious attack was made upon the house of the Pythagoreans, which was set on fire, with the loss of many lives. In the other cities of Magna Græcia, the Pythagoreans were opposed with equal determination, and the power of the clubs was greatly reduced, if not wholly suppressed. Nevertheless, the disciples of Pythagoras continued to exist for many ages, and they have probably given rise to other mystical orders, the spirit of which is similar to what the sage of Croton himself encouraged, though the particular tenets entertained may be widely different. The end of Pythagoras is not known with certainty; but it is believed that he died at Metapontum, a town of Lucania, in Italy, in 497 B.C.

If we turn from the poetry and the philosophical speculations of the Greeks to their architecture and their fine arts, we still discern the same extraordinary supremacy which was the happy privilege of the race. The pre-historic buildings of Greece were rude and massive; but at a somewhat early period the art of construction was developed into forms of beauty which have never been surpassed, and which were exquisitely adapted to the clear and brilliant heaven under which they were beheld. The only genuine Greek orders were the Doric, the Ionic, and the Corinthian; the first distinguished by massiveness, the second by graceful simplicity, and the third by florid splendour. The Corinthian order was a much later development than the two others, and by some is considered wanting in the true purity of Greek art, though it was undoubtedly capable of very beautiful effects. At the beginning of the sixth century B.C., several magnificent buildings had been erected in various parts of Greece, the most celebrated of which were the temple of Diana at Ephesus, and the temple of Juno at Samos. The grandest structures of ancient Hellas were devoted to religion; but the public edifices of the State were also imposing. Many of the early Greek temples have by this time wholly disappeared; yet several belonging to the sixth and fifth centuries B.C. are still visible in ruins. Two temples at Pæstum, in Southern Italy, exist in something like perfection, and are among the most noble specimens of the Doric style which the ravages of later days have spared. The public buildings of Athens and other Greek cities have been greatly damaged; but enough is left to show how gloriously the Greeks wrought in stone beneath the witchery of their perfect climate.

Greek sculpture is almost as familiar to the modern world as it was to the Hellenes themselves; for, although many invaluable works have been lost or injured, a large number still remain, and have been reproduced in innumerable copies, for the instruction and delight of civilized nations. In the early ages of Greek history, statues were made to none but the gods. The most primitive of these figures were carved in wood, and presented the rudest and most undeveloped forms. They were painted, clothed, and decorated with as many gewgaws as the figures of the Virgin in some Roman Catholic countries. The natural taste of the Greeks seems to have been repressed for a long while by the conventional mannerism which prevailed in this form of art; but in the sixth century B.C. statues were made in marble or metal, and about the same time figures of famous men broke the uniformity of those which were devoted to the deities. Rhœcus, and Theodorus of Samos, who lived in the sixth century, invented the art of casting figures in bronze, and statues in marble were made at Sicyon as early as 580 B.C. Some of the finest of the Greek sculptures are those which were executed in relief in the pediments and other parts of the temples. The more ancient statues were undoubtedly coloured, and the figures of warriors appear to have been furnished with bronze armour, fastened by nails. At the period of Grecian history to which we have now conducted the reader, the archaic style of sculpture still prevailed, and it was not until later ages that the perfection of the art was reached in the great works of Phidias and Praxiteles. Painting appears to have taken its rise about the beginning of the sixth century B.C.—a period remarkable in many ways for the activity of Hellenic genius. At a more advanced time, Greek painting was distinguished by great beauty, if we may rely upon the accounts to be found in ancient authors; but we have little means of estimating for ourselves the peculiar character of this art, as practised among the Hellenes.

CHAPTER XXIX.

PERSIA AND GREECE: FROM THE CONQUEST OF THE ASIATIC GREEKS TO THE BATTLE OF MARATHON.

Rivalry between the Greeks and Persians—Menaces of Cyrus—Subjugation of Greek Cities in Asia Minor—Reign of Polycrates in Samos—The Asiatic Greeks and the Expedition of Darius into Scythia—Histiæus, the Tyrant of Miletus—Unsuccessful Attack on Naxos by a Greek and Persian Fleet — The Ionian Revolt — Sea Fight before Miletus — First Expedition of Persia against European Greece — Failure of the Attempt — Second Expedition — Destruction of Eretria, in Eubœa — Previous Career of Miltiades—Disembarkation of the Persians at Marathon, in Attica—Ineffectual Embassy from Athens to Sparta—General Character of the Plain of Marathon—Respective Strength and Composition of the Opposing Armies—Defeat and Rout of the Persians—Honours paid to Miltiades—His Unfortunate Expedition against Paros, Trial, and Death — War between Athens and Ægina—Themistocles and Aristides.

We now approach that memorable period in Greek history when the Hellenic race came into armed and desperate collision with Persia, and when it was doubtful whether the forces of despotism or the unfettered energies of freedom would prevail. The first point of contact was in Asia Minor; for Cyrus, having effected the conquest of Lydia in 546 B.C., found himself in the immediate vicinity of those Greek communities which had been planted several ages before on the eastern shores of the Ægean. Such was the position which precipitated the great struggles of a somewhat later time; but in any case a trial of strength must have ensued between two forces which were gradually approaching one another, and which represented political and social ideas so utterly irreconcilable. The western victories of Cyrus, ending in the subjugation of Crœsus, had brought him close to the extremity of Asia. Europe was not far off; and, although for the present the Persian sovereign was attracted to other quarters, it could hardly be doubted that he, or one of his successors, would look towards the unknown world beyond the waves. On the other hand, the Greeks were facing eastward. In acquiring a number of settlements in Asia, they had not lost their character as Europeans; and their energy impelled them to advance into the splendid Asiatic regions which lay in front of them. The Persian Empire, though new in itself, represented the ancient and partially decaying principle of Asiatic despotism. The Greek republics, though inheriting many old traditions, partook of the youthfulness which belongs to individual enterprise and public freedom. It was plain that between two such neighbours peace was scarcely possible.

With Crœsus, as long as his power lasted, the Asiatic Greeks had maintained friendly relations, based upon an easy submission to the Lydian monarch, who seems to have done little more than impose on them a nominal yoke. After the fall of Sardis, the Ionians and Æolians offered to submit to Cyrus on the same terms as those which they had obtained from Crœsus. But the Persian monarch would be satisfied with nothing short of entire subjugation, and refused the proferred obedience, except in the case of Miletus, a rich and powerful city, whose friendship it was not thought prudent to reject. The prospect for the other Greek communities was threatening, and the philosopher Thales, a native of Miletus, suggested that the Ionians should form themselves into a confederation, to be governed, so far as military and external relations were concerned, by a congress which should meet at Teos. This admirable advice was not adopted, owing to the extreme dislike of anything like an effective union, which was characteristic of the Greeks at every period of their history. Nevertheless, the Asiatic Hellenes sent deputies to Sparta, to solicit assistance against the peril which they saw approaching. The Spartans were not inclined to give military aid, but despatched some commissioners to Ionia, to inquire into matters. One of these persons, venturing farther than he had any authority for doing, went to the great Persian king at Sardis, and warned him not to injure any city in Hellas, for the Lacedæmonians would not permit it. Cyrus had never before heard of such a people; but, receiving some information in reply to his questions, he answered with a contemptuous allusion to the Greek habits of trading, which he described as a system of cheating one another, and forswearing themselves; and added that, if he lived, the Lacedæmonians should have afflictions enough of their own to lament, without troubling themselves about the Ionians.

Very shortly after this interview Cyrus left Sardis, first for Ecbatana, and then for Central Asia. His departure was soon followed by a revolt of the Lydians, in which they were aided by

the Asiatic Greeks.* The movement collapsed before the lieutenant despatched by Cyrus could reach the spot; but it was resolved to punish with the utmost severity all the neighbouring Hellenic cities which had furnished the rebels with auxiliaries. Priêne was the first which fell, and the inhabitants were sold as slaves. A somewhat milder policy, however, was subsequently pursued; and although the Persian general, Harpagus, took one Greek city after another, by piling mounds against the walls so as to reach the battlements, he occasionally allowed the inhabitants to depart in their ships, and in other cases permitted them to assume the position of vassals to the Great King, allowing them at the same time to retain a considerable degree of freedom in their domestic affairs. The people of the Greek islands off the coast, with the exception of Samos, voluntarily gave in their submission, and it seemed for a time as if the Asiatic Hellenes would have been utterly crushed beneath the military force and weight of Persia. Those who availed themselves of the permission to leave, and who thus showed their preference of banishment to loss of freedom, were the people of Phocæa and Teos. The former settled in the south of Italy, where they founded Elea, while the latter, sailing to the coast of Thrace, built there the city of Abdera. During the remainder of the reign of Cyrus, and the whole of that of Cambyses, the Greek cities of Asia continued to form part of the Persian Empire; but the island of Samos, though divided from the continent by only a very narrow channel, was successful in maintaining its independence.

MAP OF THE AEGEAN SEA.

At this period, Samos was at the height of its prosperity and glory. Its navy was one of the most powerful in the Hellenic world, and Polycrates, its tyrant, who, though a despotic ruler, was a man of liberal tastes and intellectual sympathies, was so fortunate in his ventures that he aspired to the dominion of all Ionia, together with the islands of the Ægean. The strength of his position was such that when the Spartans entered his territory, at the request of some discontented Samians who had been exiled, the invaders besieged the capital for forty days without success, and were then compelled to retire. Art and letters were encouraged by Polycrates, who entertained the poets Ibycus and Anacreon at his court, and to him are attributed the magnificent temple of Juno at Samos, the mole to protect the harbour, and an aqueduct carried through a mountain seven furlongs in length. His friend Amasis, the sovereign of Egypt, frequently warned him that his success was too uniform, and that the gods would ultimately visit him with some terrible reverse. This at length came in a very unexpected form. He was invited to the mainland by Orœtes, the Persian governor of Sardis, who had conceived a mortal hatred of him, and, when there, was crucified by his treacherous enemy, in 522 B.C. Polycrates had been an ally of Cambyses; and Darius, when he came to the throne shortly after, was greatly incensed against Orœtes for this action, as well as for other misdeeds. The punishment of the satrap has been related in an earlier Chapter of this History.†

The expedition of Darius into Scythia was aided by the Asiatic Greeks, as the reader is aware, and the authority of the Persian king was subsequently extended to Thrace and Macedonia. One of the most devoted servants of Darius was Histiæus, the tyrant of Miletus, who, when the Scythians would have persuaded the Greeks to

* See p. 225.

† See p. 246.

break the bridge over the Danube, by which alone Darius could escape from the perilous northern regions into which he had ventured, successfully opposed the suggestion, although it had the support of Miltiades, the ruler of the Thracian Chersonesus, afterwards celebrated as the victor of Marathon. The argument of the Milesian is said to have been, that if the Persian army was destroyed, and the power of Darius brought to an end, a popular government would be established in every Ionian city, and the tyrants expelled. But, as Histiæus was the only Ionian who occupied the position of an independent prince, this consideration could hardly have influenced the majority of the Greeks who guarded the bridge; and it is therefore probable that some at least refused to follow the advice of the Scythians because to have acted otherwise would have been a gross breach of faith with one against whom they had no precise ground of quarrel. In any case, however, Histiæus earned the gratitude of Darius, who bestowed on him the town of Myrcinus, near the Strymon, a river dividing Thrace from Macedonia. But their friendship was short-lived. Megabazus, the Persian general to whom Darius had entrusted the task of subduing the Greek cities on the European side of the Hellespont, and of penetrating into lands still further to the north-west, perceived, while engaged in the conquest of Pæonia (a country north of Macedon), that Histiæus was increasing his power to an extent which might afterwards prove dangerous

THE BATTLE OF MARATHON.

to Persian supremacy. He communicated these suspicions to Darius, who, with many professions of amity, summoned his vassal to accompany him to Susa, the Persian capital.

The satrap of the western provinces of Asia Minor at this time was Artaphernes, brother of Darius, and, under his general authority, the local affairs of each city were directed by a native administrator, who was the mere creature of the satrap. Miletus still enjoyed a kind of independence, and, in the absence of Histiæus, was governed by Aristagoras, his son-in-law. To this ruler, the oligarchical party in the isle of Naxos applied for assistance when, about 502 B.C., they were driven forth by a popular rising. Aristagoras was willing to grant the required aid, but, doubting whether his power was equal to that of the Naxians, he requested the co-operation of Artaphernes, who placed a fleet of two hundred ships at his disposal, hoping that the enterprise would result in the conquest of all the Cyclades, together with the adjacent island of Eubœa. The forces were under the command of Megabates, one of the Persian nobility, and the fleet sailed in the first instance to the shores of Chios, to divert the suspicion of the Naxians. Here a quarrel ensued between Megabates and Aristagoras, each asserting that his authority was superior to that of the other. The former, irritated by the pretensions of the latter, secretly despatched information to the people of Naxos, who made preparations for defence, and, on the fleet arriving at its place of destination, offered so stout a resistance that, after a siege of four months, in 501 B.C., the commanders despaired of success, and the ships sailed back to Miletus.

The unfortunate result of the enterprise placed Aristagoras in a dangerous position towards his suzerain, the Persian monarch, who might have revenged on him the humiliation which was in truth due to Megabates. He therefore began to consider the advisability of inciting his countrymen to revolt, and shortly afterwards received a message from his father-in-law, Histiæus, suggesting the same course. The leading citizens of Miletus, before whom the project was laid, gave it their approval, and the other Greek cities of Asia were requested to join in the attempt. The rulers of those cities, who, as already observed, acted merely as lieutenants of the Persian satrap, were, for the most part, still on board the fleet which had been sent against Naxos, and it was resolved to seize their persons as the first step towards a successful revolt. Democratical governments were then established in all the Greek cities of Asia, and in the adjacent islands. Aristagoras resigned his power into the hands of the people; and in 500 B.C. the Asiatic Hellenes made open declaration of their revolt from the rule of Persia. The issue, however, seemed so doubtful, unless external aid could be procured, that Aristagoras went to Sparta (then the most powerful of the Grecian States), and solicited the alliance of Cleomenes, to whom he held out a prospect of invading Persia, and thus possessing himself of vast riches. He even offered direct bribes to the Lacedæmonian king; but Cleomenes, though at first inclined to listen to the proposal of the Milesians, was at length too keenly persuaded of the dangers of the attempt to throw in his fortunes with the desperate venture of Aristagoras. At Athens, however, the latter was more successful. Athens was the mother-city of the Ionians, and she at once promised a squadron of twenty ships for the assistance of the insurrection.

The Athenian fleet was not slow in crossing the Ægean. It was soon augmented by five vessels from Eretria, in Eubœa; and the troops, having disembarked at Ephesus, marched on Sardis, together with a strong force of Ionians. Artaphernes retired into the fortress, and the main body of the Lydian capital fell into the hands of the invaders. A house having been set on fire during the general pillage, the flames spread to the rest, the greater number of which were built of wickerwork thatched with straw. The whole of Sardis was destroyed; but the inhabitants, gathering together, and finding themselves reinforced by heavy detachments of Persians, which were being hurried up from all quarters, resolved to attack the enemy. The Ionians and their allies saw the danger of the position, and speedily retired towards Ephesus, but were overtaken by the Persians, and defeated with great loss. The Athenians escaped to their ships, and Darius vowed to take vengeance on the strangers from Europe. He directed one of his attendants to remind him thrice every day at dinner to "remember the Athenians;" but, for the present, nothing was permitted to divert his attention from the revolt of his Ionian subjects, which it was necessary to the safety of his empire that he should repress with the utmost expedition. The whole of that part of Hellas which was included in the Persian dominions—and it was no inconsiderable part, including cities on the Hellespont and the Propontis, in Cyprus and elsewhere—joined the movement for freedom, and it seemed for a while as if the attempt would be successful. The Carians, situated on the south-western coast of Asia Minor, rose against the Persian sovereign at the same time, and the Scythians made a plundering raid

into the Thracian possessions of Darius. Thus aided, both directly and indirectly, the Ionians maintained their attitude of resistance for some years, notwithstanding the loss of their Athenian allies, who had now deserted the cause; yet, in the end, they were unable to succeed. After awhile, the immense force of Persia crushed the rebellion in one centre after another, and Aristagoras sailed with a large body of Milesians to the coast of Thrace, where he was slain before a city which he had besieged.

The climax of the war was a sea-fight before Miletus, which occurred in 495 B.C., the sixth year of the revolt. The Ionian fleet, with its auxiliaries, was stationed at Ladé, a small island close by, which is now united with the continent. This naval force consisted of three hundred and fifty-three ships; on the side of the Persians was a Phœnician fleet, numbering six hundred ships. Overtures with a view to the surrender of the Ionian galleys were made by some of the Greek adherents of Darius then on board the Phœnician vessels; but they were at once rejected. Nevertheless, there was a great want of unanimity among the naval commanders and the sea-forces of the Greeks. Dionysius of Phocæa would have introduced a stricter discipline among the sailors; but they rebelled against his rules, and the Samian leaders, opening communications with the Persian commander, offered to desert as soon as battle should be joined. An attack speedily followed; the Samian ships sailed away, then the Lesbian, and finally several of the rest. The ships of Chios, one hundred in number, remained at their posts, and, accompanied by a few others, nobly resisted the enemy until overpowered. Miletus itself was soon afterwards taken by storm, and those of the men who were not slain were carried away, together with the women and children, to a town called Ampe, near the mouth of the Tigris. The other Greek cities of Asia Minor, and those of the islands of the Hellespont, of the Propontis, and of Thrace, were treated with equal cruelty, and Miltiades, the despot of the Chersonese, was compelled to seek refuge at Athens, which he reached with difficulty, owing to the hot pursuit of the Phœnician fleet. Histiæus, who had managed to blind Darius to his treason, but who was unable to find any support among his insurgent countrymen, as they distrusted his motives, passed the remainder of his days in a series of piratical expeditions along the shores of Europe and Asia, until, landing one day on the coast of Mysia to reap the standing corn, he was seized by a Persian force, sent to Sardis, and there crucified by Artaphernes, who had long before detected his complicity with the revolt, and had awaited a favourable opportunity for effecting his ruin.

The Ionic rising being suppressed, Darius resolved to take vengeance on the Athenians for the aid they had given to the insurgents. In 492 B.C. a large Persian army was despatched across the Hellespont under the command of Mardonius, a Persian noble married to the king's daughter; and the tribes of Thrace and Macedonia still remaining independent were reduced to submission. But the resistance offered by the Brygians, one of the Thracian communities, was so obstinate that Mardonius was obliged to return to Persia: at the same time, a Persian fleet, which had been sent to the Gulf of Therma, on the north-eastern side of Greece, was devastated by a storm which wrecked three hundred vessels, and destroyed the lives of twenty thousand men. The result of this first expedition was disastrous; but Darius immediately began preparations for another venture, and sent heralds to most of the Grecian States to demand earth and water as tokens of submission. Several Hellenic cities performed the required act of humiliation; but Athens and Sparta indignantly refused, and even treated the heralds with extreme violence. In the spring of 490 B.C., an immense army was despatched from Cilicia, in Asia Minor, under the command of Datis, a Median, and Artaphernes the Younger, son of the satrap of Sardis. These generals were instructed to subdue all the Grecian States which had refused earth and water, and to burn the cities of Athens and Eretria, the forces of which had been mainly instrumental in destroying Sardis. On leaving Cilicia, the Persian fleet first sailed to Naxos, the capital of which was burned, while the inhabitants fled to the mountains. This struck such terror into the other islands of the Cyclades that they submitted without a blow; but, on the Persian armament reaching Eubœa, an obstinate resistance was maintained for six days by the people of Eretria. Six times were the Persians repulsed with heavy loss; on the seventh day, two of the chief citizens, possibly despairing of success, and dreading the consequences of prolonged resistance, opened the gates to the enemy. The city was afterwards destroyed by the Persians, and the people were sent in chains to Darius, who is said to have treated them kindly, and to have settled them at Ardericca, in the district of Cissia, a part of Susiana. Datis the Median remained a few days at Eretria, and then crossed over to Attica, where he landed on the plain of Marathon, which Hippias, the expelled despot of Athens, who accompanied

the expedition, had pointed out to him as a favourable position.

Among the ten generals who had recently been elected by the Athenians for the ensuing year, were three whose names occupy a great position in the annals of Greece. These were Miltiades, Themistocles, and Aristides. The previous history of Miltiades and his family had been a singular one. His uncle, who bore the same name as himself, had acquired dominion in the Thracian Chersonesus by a curious train of circumstances. A tribe called the Dolonci, who had been harassed by a long war with the Absinthians, were directed by the Oracle of Delphi to take for their king the first man who, on their return home, should invite them to enter his house, and partake of his hospitality. The Dolonci, after receiving this response, returned by way of Phocis, Bœotia, and Athens. At Athens they were kindly received by Miltiades the elder, who, upon being informed of what the oracle had said, returned with the Dolonci to the Chersonesus, where he was invested with sovereign power. His first measure was to stop the inroads of the Absinthians by building a wall across the isthmus; but he was afterwards unsuccessful in an expedition against Lampsacus, a city of Mysia, in Asia Minor, situated on the Hellespont to the north-east of Abydos. The elder Miltiades was a great friend of Crœsus, King of Lydia, and his memory was always held in regard by the Dolonci. The younger Miltiades, with whose actions we are now concerned, succeeded to the government of the Chersonesus shortly after the death of his uncle. We have seen that he took part in the Ionian revolt against Persia, and that he was ultimately compelled to seek refuge in his native city, Athens. Although sharing in the general misfortunes of that period, he had succeeded, during the insurrection, in obtaining possession of Lemnos and Imbros, from which he expelled the Persian garrison and the original Pelasgian inhabitants. He then handed over the islands to Athens, and on returning to that city was received as a public benefactor. His government of the Chersonesus had been the rule of a despot, and to strengthen his position he had married Hegesipyla, the daughter of Olorus, King of the Thracians. The wandering tribes of Scythia gave him much trouble, and he was compelled for a short period to fly before their incursions. His military achievements, therefore, had not, up to the date we have now reached, been generally remarkable for success, and his former position as a despot could hardly have recommended him to the Athenian populace, though he was acquitted on a charge to that effect which was brought against him on his return to Athens. His determined opposition to the Persians, and his conquest of Lemnos and Imbros, appear, however, to have been considered reasons sufficient for appointing him one of the annual generals of the Republic; and his conduct at Marathon proved the wisdom of the choice then made.

A SOLDIER OF MARATHON.
(*From the Monument of Aristion.*)

Early in September, 490 B.C., the Persian host disembarked at Marathon. The situation was critical for the Athenians; but they had done their best to obtain allies. Immediately on hearing that Eretria had fallen, the authorities at Athens sent to Sparta a courier named Phidippides, with an urgent appeal for assistance. This courier is said to have performed the journey of a hundred and fifty miles, on foot, in forty-eight hours. The fact appears incredible; but it has been stated by a modern traveller that the Persian foot-messengers will run for several days successively at the rate of sixty or seventy miles a day. Phidippides was well received by the Spartan Ephors, and aid was readily promised. But unfortunately it wanted only a few days of the full moon, and the religious customs of the Lacedæmonians forbade the commencement of a march under those circumstances. Two thousand Spartans were, indeed, despatched on the day following the full moon, and reached Athens late on the third day after they had started; but the great battle between the Athenians and the Persians had then been fought, and, in the magnificent success which crowned the efforts of Greece against her invaders, Sparta had no share. We should not, however, be justified in supposing that the Lacedæmonians were inspired by any wish to betray the general cause. They probably acted from a feeling that was

perfectly sincere, but which, in its blind devotion to ancient forms, might have imperilled the freedom of all Hellas, had not the Athenians been equal to the demand which was made upon their heroism.

The plain of Marathon will always be regarded as one of the most illustrious of historic sites. It is distant twenty-two miles from Athens by the shortest road, and is situated on the narrow channel which separates the eastern coast of Attica from the western coast of Eubœa. The sea at that part forms a bay; on all other sides, the plain is bounded by an amphitheatre of mountains. The length of the plain is about six miles, the breadth two; and at the northern and southern extremities are marshes, of which the former is much larger than the latter. The level ground, which is smooth, green, and unbroken, is crossed by a stream running down into the bay; and it was on the southern side of this stream that the Athenians were posted on the day of battle. Before occupying that position, and while encamped upon the mountains which surround the plain, it was debated whether, in the absence of the Spartans, they should venture on an attack, or delay their operations until the arrival of the promised succours. Miltiades and four others were in favour of immediate action; five were in favour of postponement; and the casting vote lay with Callimachus, the polemarch, or third archon. The fervid arguments of Miltiades, aided by those of Themistocles and Aristides, persuaded Callimachus that delay would involve greater hazards than were likely to attend a bold assault; and the ten generals who were entitled to direct the army in rotation, each for one day —or at any rate the four who were in favour of instant attack—surrendered their power into the hands of Miltiades, that the energy of command might not be dissipated by division.

The opponents were very unequally matched. The Athenians could muster only ten thousand heavy-armed soldiers, who, however, were accompanied by numerous slaves, as light-armed attendants. Cavalry they had none, nor did their forces include any archers. A small addition to their ranks arrived a few days before the engagement; the whole force of Platæa, amounting to no more than one thousand heavy-armed men, having been despatched by the citizens, in gratitude for the assistance which Athens had rendered them in a struggle against Thebes. The Persian hosts were multitudinous, although it is impossible to affirm with any confidence the exact numbers which were ranged against the Greeks. The statements of different authorities vary from 600,000 to 200,000 men; but the force actually on the field of Marathon was perhaps not more than 120,000 at the most. Some allowance should be made for the sick, and large numbers must have been left on board the triremes, unless, indeed, these were hauled up on the beach. Still, there can be no reasonable doubt that the forces of the Persians were enormously superior in mass to those of the Greeks. It must also be remembered that they were soldiers of tried valour and of brilliant reputation—the material power of an empire which had conquered one great monarchy after another, and had but seldom experienced what it is to be defeated. All the resources and instruments of war then known were at the command of these Asiatic hosts. Their archers were the best in the world, and the operations of the campaign were conducted under the eyes of generals who were masters in the art of war. On the other hand, a source of weakness may have existed in the numerous discordant nationalities of which the invading battalions were composed. The Persians and Sacians, numbering 30,000, were the flower of the army; but a large part of Western Asia supplied contingents which were not of equal excellence. The force even included some 10,000 Greeks from the conquered islands, and it is hardly to be supposed that these would fight with any willingness or determination against men of their own race. All such facts must be taken into consideration in estimating the antecedent probabilities of the contest; yet, after every allowance has been made, it is apparent that the Athenians, in resolving to give battle to the enemy, undertook a task which tried their heroism to the utmost, and which was attended by risks of the most tremendous character.

The battle is believed to have been fought on the 11th of September, 490 B.C. On that day, the Persian army was drawn up along the plain, at a distance of about a mile from the sea. The greater part of their line, like the whole line of the Greeks, stood south of the river which courses through the level ground; but a small portion of it extended to the north of the stream as well. The native Persians, and the Sacians, were in the centre of the invading line of battle, while the two extremities were held by the inferior troops. The Athenians stood on rising ground, their flanks resting on the surrounding mountains, and their line generally much thinner than was usual with the Greeks, in order to cover the whole of the open space, and so avoid the danger of being outflanked. A mile separated the opponents, and Miltiades, judging that his greatest

probability of success lay in a sudden and furious onslaught, directed his soldiers to advance at a running pace over this intermediate tract. With loud cries and augmenting impetus, they rushed upon the Persians, who regarded them as madmen doomed to certain destruction. The antagonists, however, were soon engaged in a furious and deadly combat, and the two wings of the Athenian force, shattering the masses immediately opposed to them, drove the enemy in disorder towards the shore and the marshes. The best of the Athenian soldiers were

PLAIN OF MARATHON.

in the right wing; at the extreme left were the Platæans; and it was in these two directions that the Greek charge bore all before its fiery sweep. The centre, composed of somewhat inferior troops, was the point where the Greek army had to meet the very best divisions of the Persian force. The result was seen in the scattering of the Athenian centre, where the soldiers took to flight, pursued by the Persians and Sacians. The misfortune, however, was very soon redeemed. Miltiades summoned his two wings from the pursuit, rallied his centre, and, closing round the Persian flanks, attacked his opponents with a strongly concentrated force. The day was now wearing towards dusk, and the Persians, who were facing west, found the full glare of the setting sun in their faces. The Greeks redoubled their efforts, and bore down with such strength upon the Persian ranks that the invaders gave way, lost their military formation, and were soon driven in disastrous rout towards the sea. Closely pursued by the Athenians, it was with difficulty that they regained their ships; but the greater number succeeded in getting off.

It is recorded that the Persian loss on this occasion was 6,400 men, while the Greeks left only 192 upon the field. But estimates of this nature, even with respect to modern battles, where there are better means of ascertaining the truth, are apt to be conjectural and dubious. It is not likely that the Athenian loss was so slight as tradition affirms; but, considering the whole course of the battle, it is highly probable that the slaughter on the Persian side was much greater than that on the side of their adversaries. After the invaders had re-embarked, the Athenians tried to set their vessels on fire, but succeeded in destroying only seven. Many of the fugitives were entangled in the marshes, and unable to regain their ships; and probably the greater number of the Persian slain received their death-wounds in the disorderly flight towards the sea—a fact which would account for the excess of loss on the Persian side, as compared with that of the Greeks. The despot Hippias, then an old man, is believed to have perished in the battle; in the

ranks of the patriots, the polemarch Callimachus was found among the slain. One of the most illustrious combatants on that ever-memorable day was Æschylus, the poet. He does not appear to have received any wound; but his brother, Cynægirus, had his hand cut off while endeavouring to seize a Persian vessel by the stern, and afterwards died of the injury. The great achievement of Marathon was mainly due to the Athenian troops; but the thousand warriors from Platæa had also borne a noble part, and the Athenians recollected it with the deepest gratitude. The Platæans were admitted to a share in the citizenship of the State they had aided, and were thenceforward included in the public prayers of Athens. But the religious among the Greeks attributed their triumph to the direct interposition of the gods. On the field of Marathon, a tumulus, which may yet be seen about half a mile from the sea, was erected over the bodies of the fallen patriots, and a supernatural character has clung to the spot ever since. Six hundred years after the battle, Pausanias recorded that, in the general belief, the plain of Marathon was haunted with spectral warriors, who every night encountered one another in shadowy battles, of which the clamour could be distinctly heard. Even now, the superstition has not entirely died out.

The danger to Athens did not terminate with this splendid victory. The Persians were scarcely embarked when an uplifted shield was seen flashing from a neighbouring promontory in the rays of the setting sun. Among the Athenians, there were still some partizans of Hippias, and one of them had signalled to the Persians after this fashion, to invite them to an attack on Athens while the republican army was still absent. The fleet set sail down the coast of Attica, with intent to double the promontory of Sunium, and thus approach the vicinity of Athens. Miltiades, however, suspected the design, and marched back to the city, which he reached in time to baffle the treacherous project. The fleet was already in sight when the conquerors of Marathon arrived at the harbour of Phalerum. The malcontents were overawed, and the Persians, again beholding in their front the men by whom they had so recently been defeated, refrained from disembarkation, and sailed for Asia, carrying with them the prisoners whom they had taken at Eretria. Miltiades was rewarded with the highest honours which the State could confer. A monument to him was erected on the field of Marathon, and his figure

MILTIADES.

THEMISTOCLES.

was prominently introduced into the picture of the battle which adorned the Painted Porch of Athens. He had undoubtedly exhibited the highest qualities of a general; yet there was an element in his nature which removed him very far from the noblest ranks of heroism, and the conclusion of his life darkened the lustre of his one glorious deed.

He had a feeling of personal malice against a leading citizen of Paros, a flourishing island of the Cyclades. To serve his own private ends, he obtained a fleet of seventy ships from the Athenians, without saying anything more than that he would enrich the State by some expedition, the details of which were to remain a secret until the purpose was accomplished. Thus armed, he attacked the city of Paros, but was encountered with so much determination that success seemed hopeless. While meditating a retreat, he received a message from a priestess of Ceres officiating on the island, who promised that she would put the city in his power, if he would visit by night a certain temple which no male person was permitted to enter. The method contemplated is unknown; but it would seem that some magical rites were intended. Miltiades went to the appointed place at the hour mentioned, leaped over the outer fence, and was proceeding towards the sanctuary, with the design, according to Herodotus,* of committing some sacrilegious act, when, just as he arrived at the door, a thrill of horror came over him, and, in getting back across the fence, his thigh or knee was seriously injured. His enterprise was now utterly ruined, and he returned to Athens, neither taking with him the money he had promised, nor having reduced Paros, which nevertheless he had ravaged during his operations of six-and-twenty days. The circumstances of this disastrous enterprise are surrounded with a good deal of mystery, and it is not absolutely certain that Miltiades alone was to blame. According to some accounts, the hero of Marathon was despatched by the Athenian Government with orders to punish those islands which had submitted to the Persians; and it is said that the true reason for his sudden retreat was a report that Persian vessels were coming to attack him. The narrative in Herodotus, however, is to the effect that Miltiades acted from personal motives in the execution of a secret plan, and that his discomfiture was attended by the strange and obscure incidents to which reference has just been made. This is the view generally accepted by modern historians, and it certainly places the conduct of Miltiades in a very evil light. Herodotus lived in the next generation to that of the hero, and his details were derived from the Parians.

Arriving once more in Athens, Miltiades found the popular feeling much inflamed against him. The failure before Paros had obliterated all recollection of the triumph at Marathon, and there were other reasons why this remarkable man was viewed with distrust by his fellow-citizens. The two great parties into which Athens was then divided, and which stood in opposition to one another with feelings of the utmost bitterness, were deducible remotely from the great families of the Pisistratidæ and the Alcmæonidæ. The aristocracy adhered to the former of these factions; the mass of the people followed the leadership of the latter: a reversal of the first position of the two parties, which had arisen in the course of events. Miltiades was an adherent of the Pisistratidæ. He had himself reigned as a despot in the Thracian Chersonesus; now that Hippias was dead, it may have been suspected by many that he aimed at the acquisition of supreme power at Athens itself. All these circumstances intensified the feeling of rancour with which he was regarded by a large body of the citizens; and, assuming the truth of the worst account as to his motives in the expedition against Paros, an admirable pretext for indicting him lay ready to the hands of his enemies. His accuser was Xanthippus, who had married one of the Alcmæonidæ, and is chiefly celebrated as the father of Pericles. The charge was that he had deceived the people, which there is too much reason to fear that he had: the case was therefore heard before the popular court of the Heliæa. Disabled by his injury, which was beginning to gangrene, Miltiades was unable to stand, or even to speak in his own defence, but was borne into court on a litter surrounded by his friends, who pleaded in his behalf. The charge does not seem to have been answered in any essential respect; it could only be urged that the services Miltiades had performed at Marathon should temper the severity of punishment for the crime he had committed. The judgment demanded by his accuser was death; but the sentence was commuted into a penalty of fifty talents, which may perhaps have been the cost of the armament he induced the Athenians to send against Paros. Before he could raise this sum, he died of his wound, though whether in prison or in his own house is uncertain. The fine was afterwards paid by his son Cimon, and in a little while the disgrace of Miltiades was forgotten in the memory of his deeds at Marathon. The expedition to Paros, and the death of Miltiades, appear to

* Book VI., chap. 134.

have occurred in the year 489 B.C. Much has been said as to the ingratitude of the Athenians in condemning so distinguished a hero; but the objection cannot be maintained, unless upon the assumption that past services entitle a man to commit any offence against the public weal, without subjecting him to the penalty which usually attaches to such acts. At the same time, it should not be forgotten that, on the most favourable showing, the Athenians themselves were to blame in granting power to even the most distinguished citizen for the conduct of an enterprise which he veiled in secrecy, but which they had reason to believe would have the character of a piratical attack. Knowing what we do of the Athenian nature, it is difficult to avoid suspecting that, had he succeeded, Miltiades would not have been visited by the sentence which failure brought upon his head.

The victory at Marathon delivered the Athenians for a little while from the fear of Persia; but a war with one of the Grecian communities broke out shortly afterwards. In the year before the Persian inroad, Ægina was one of the Hellenic States which gave earth and water to the envoys of Darius, in token of submission; and this circumstance excited the bitter resentment of the Athenians, between whom and the Æginetans a feud had long existed. An embassy was accordingly despatched from Athens to Sparta, accusing the Æginetans of betraying the cause of Hellas. Sparta was then the leading State in Greece, and it was therefore to her that the task of punishing the Æginetans was confided by the citizens of Athens. Dissensions between the two Spartan kings, Cleomenes and Demaratus, delayed the interference of the Lacedæmonians for some time; but after the deposition of Demaratus, on a charge of illegitimacy, and the substitution of Leotychides, a joint demand was made by the two Spartan monarchs for the surrender of ten Æginetan citizens, who, being given up, were deposited as hostages in the hands of the Athenians. After the battle of Marathon, Ægina endeavoured to recover her exiles; the Athenians refused to restore them; and war speedily followed. The Æginetans possessed the most powerful navy of any Grecian commonwealth, and it appeared to Themistocles that Athens would have no chance against her adversary, unless she created for herself a naval force of even greater size. His advice to this effect was adopted with the greater readiness, as Persia was preparing for a still more formidable invasion of Greece. A fleet of two hundred ships was speedily built by the Athenians, and a decree was passed that twenty new vessels should be constructed every year. The war with Ægina continued until the invasion of Greece by Xerxes, and it was characterized by great energy on both sides, though not by any events of high importance.

The two leading citizens of Athens at this time were Themistocles and Aristides. The former, though possessed of transcendent genius as a statesman, was infected with that personal dishonesty which was so frequently seen among the Athenians. Aristides, on the other hand, though not remarkable for brilliance of intellect, earned the very highest character among his countrymen for integrity and honour. After a while he was ostracised, and one of those who voted for his banishment gave no other reason than that he was tired of hearing him called the Just. The proposal of Themistocles, that Athens should be converted into a naval power, was strongly resisted by Aristides, who thought his countrymen would be deteriorated by the change. This led to frequent and violent dissensions, and the quarrels of the two statesmen lasted until the banishment of him who, with greater honesty, had less efficient qualifications for the conduct of the Republic under the circumstances of danger which were now approaching.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE EXPEDITION OF XERXES.

Preparations for the Second Persian Expedition into Greece—Accession of Xerxes—Formation of a vast Army and Navy—The Bridges of Boats across the Hellespont—Excavation of a Ship-Canal through the Peninsula of Mount Athos—The Order of March—Nations serving under Xerxes—Estimate of Numbers—Review of the Army on the Hellespont—The Passage of the Bridges into Europe—Incidents of the March through Thrace and Macedonia—Partial and Ineffective Opposition of the Grecian States—The Pass of Thermopylæ—Advance of Xerxes through Thessaly—The Spartan Force under Leonidas—Movements of the Greek and Persian Fleets—The Battle in the Pass—Naval Fight at Artemisium—Athens abandoned by its Citizens—Southward March of Xerxes—Destruction of Athens by the Persians—Position of the Persian and Greek Fleets at Phalerum and Salamis—Dissensions among the Greek Commanders—Battle of Salamis, and Defeat of the Persian Navy—Retirement of the Hostile Fleet—Suspicious Conduct of Themistocles—Sufferings of the Persian Army—Return of Xerxes to Sardis.

GREECE had been delivered from the immediate terror of the Persian name by the great victory of Marathon. But the danger was not at an end, for the vast Asiatic monarchy could hardly accept as final a defeat which might have seemed due to accidental circumstances. In a country such as ancient Persia, force is everything: considerations of right have no influence; political morality does not exist; and the safety of the Persian Monarchy may have seemed to depend, even more than in truth it did, on the prosperity of its arms. Darius made preparations for a still more formidable expedition, which was to crush the Hellenes by sheer weight of numbers. These preparations extended over a period of three years, and would perhaps have been brought to bear in the fourth, but for the revolt in Egypt. Before this was subdued, Darius died, and in 485 B.C. Xerxes ascended the throne. The new sovereign was personally inclined to abandon the enterprise, for his disposition was not martial; but warlike counsels prevailed, and, as soon as the Egyptian movement was suppressed, the thoughts of Xerxes were directed across the Hellespont to the distant land of Greece. Nevertheless, he was in no hurry to move. Four years more were consumed in preparations which were destined, as a reasonable foresight might have anticipated, simply to choke themselves by their own excess. Soldiers from all parts of the Empire were ordered to assemble at Critalla, in Cappadocia. A great variety of distinct tribes and nations, differing widely from one another in every respect, and ranging from the civilised and splendid Persians and Medes to the savage, ill-armed, and half-naked hordes from the deserts of Libya and the Upper Nile, met at the place appointed; and at the same time a vast fleet was created by the enforced contributions of the Phœnicians, the Ionians, and other maritime races over whom the Persian monarchs exercised the rights of suzerainty.

That the army, when once in motion, should not perish for lack of necessaries, immense stores of provisions were collected by the various satraps, and deposited at stations along the line of march. Some important engineering works were also undertaken, for facilitating the great design. Phœnician and Egyptian artificers were employed in the construction of a bridge of boats across the Hellespont, which, starting from Abydos, on the Asiatic side of the straits, where they are about a mile across, reached a point on the European shore between Sestos and Madytus. This is the part associated with the poetical legend of Hero and Leander, and with the famous swimming feat of Lord Byron. The bridge of Xerxes was destroyed by a tempest, and the baffled despot is said not only to have beheaded the chief engineers, but to have scourged the waters with whips, and to have cast a set of chains into them, as a sign of subjection. It is but fair, however, to recollect that we have no other evidence as to the truth of these stories than what is derived from the statements of enemies. On the destruction of the first bridge, two others were built at the same spot—one for the army, the other for the baggage-animals; and these were of sufficient strength to answer their purpose. Bridges of boats were already well known to the Persians, and were very similar in construction to those still used in warfare; but these two were characterized by extraordinary solidity and strength. The shore-cables were singularly massive, durable, and weighty, being made of papyrus and hemp, in the proportion of two strands of the former to one strand of the latter; and the work was completed by laying down upon the planks a solid causeway of earth and brushwood, over which men, horses, and vehicles could

pass with the greatest ease, and by the erection of a high bulwark on each side, so that the animals might not be frightened by looking down upon the sea. It has sometimes been remarked that the construction of these bridges was a mere piece of ostentation, as the army might have been conveyed across the channel in ships; but the saving of time must have been immense, and the outlay of skill and labour was therefore not lost.

Another great work was the cutting of a canal in the vicinity of Mount Athos, in order to avoid the necessity of doubling a very dangerous promontory. This famous mountain is situated near the extremity of a long, narrow peninsula jutting out from the eastern coast of Macedonia. Plutarch and Pliny allege that, owing to the great height of the mountain, its shadow, at the summer solstice, was projected on to the market-place of Myrina, the capital of Lemnos, at a distance of eighty-seven miles. Athos is now called Monte Santo, and is celebrated for its numerous monasteries of Greek monks, whose collections of ancient manuscripts are regarded with interest by the learned. The peninsula, which extends into the Ægean between the Strymonic and Singitic Gulfs (now called the Gulfs of Contessa and of Monte Santo), is justly dreaded by mariners, on account of the angry sea which breaks upon its shores. It was here that the fleet which accompanied Mardonius on the first expedition against Greece, in 492 B.C., was wrecked and shattered to pieces. Xerxes feared a recurrence of the calamity, and therefore ordered the making of a ship-canal through the peninsula. The trench was a mile and a half in length, and ran at the foot of the ridge striking off from the main body of the mountain, near the cities of Acanthus and Sana. The work employed a large number of men for three years, and the channel was supplied with water from the neighbouring sea. Sufficient breadth was allowed to admit of two ships passing one another, and the course of the canal is yet to be distinctly traced from gulf to gulf, with the exception of about two hundred yards in the middle, where the hollow appears to have been filled up. The channel is now choked with reeds and flags; but water gathers in it from the surrounding heights, and the route pursued by the fleet of Xerxes is still apparent to the observer.

The preparations of the Persian king were accomplished by the end of the year 481 B.C. Xerxes spent the winter at Sardis, from which he set out in the spring of 480 B.C., accompanied by his vast and magnificently-appointed force. The numbers of that force can scarcely have been less than a million, and may perhaps, as Herodotus asserts, have exceeded two millions and a half, including the seamen on board the fleet. In any case, it was probably the largest army ever set in motion. The host, whatever its precise numerical strength, was divided into two bodies of nearly equal size, and the intervening space was kept clear for the monarch, his retinue, and his guards. First came the baggage; then the leading half of the army; then the personal attendants on the king. These attendants consisted of a thousand Persian horsemen, and an equal number of Persian spearmen, the latter carrying reversed spears, with golden pomegranates at the ends opposite to the points. In their rear were ten sacred horses, bred on the Nisæan plains of Media, and now gorgeously caparisoned in the trappings of royalty. They were followed by a sacred car, drawn by eight white steeds, and then by Xerxes himself, who rode sometimes in a chariot drawn by Nisæan horses, and at other times in a litter. A second body of a thousand spearmen and a thousand horsemen marched immediately after the monarch; and the multitudinous procession was continued by a corps of Persian infantry, numbering ten thousand, and called the Immortals, because they were always maintained at the same figure. Pomegranates of silver ornamented the spears of nine thousand of these warriors; pomegranates of gold those of the remaining thousand, who formed the outer ranks. The rear of the royal procession consisted of ten thousand Persian cavalry, who were followed, at an interval of two furlongs, by the second division of the invading host.

The composition of the army was most heterogeneous. The best portion consisted of Persians and Medes; but the bulk of the forces must have been made up of other nationalities. Herodotus states that forty-nine nations furnished troops to the army of Xerxes, and the names of some of these are scarcely to be recognized by the modern reader. Barbarian hordes from the north of Asia mingled with Egyptians and Ethiopians, with Assyrians, Chaldæans, and Bactrians, with the highly civilised communities of Asia Minor, with Indians and Parthians; afterwards, when the expedition had crossed into Europe, with Greeks from the islands, with Thracians, with Macedonians, and with mixed races from the vicinity of the Danube. Eighty thousand of the Asiatic contingents were cavalry; twenty thousand rode in chariots, or on camels; the remainder formed the infantry.

Every species of weapon and of armour then known to the nations of the earth was seen in this motley array; and doubtless every degree of military capacity, from the highest to the lowest, had its numerous representatives. But fighting men were not the only members of the prodigious force which poured like a torrent from the heart of Asia towards the shores of Europe. If the testimony of Herodotus is to be accepted, there were at least as many camp-followers as there were men in the army and in the navy. Even this does not give us the sum-

PASS OF THERMOPYLÆ.

total of the amazing multitude which shared the fortunes of Xerxes; for numerous women accompanied the troops, and to these must be added myriads of draught-cattle and other beasts of burden, together with so many Indian dogs that, as Herodotus says, the number could not be conjectured. Supposing the number of the invaders to have been considerably less than tradition affirms, it was still sufficiently vast to excite surprise as to how so many living creatures could have been provided with food. The Scamander and some other rivers are said to have been actually drunk dry by the throngs of men and beasts; and, astonishing as the fact may appear, it is very far from being impossible.

The march from Sardis to Abydos was attended by no incidents of importance, except the destruction of some men by a violent thunderstorm amidst the ridges of Mount Ida, and the occurrence of a nocturnal panic amongst the troops when in the neighbourhood of Troy. Having at length reached Abydos, Xerxes ordered a review of the whole army. A lofty throne of white marble was erected on the summit of a hill, and the king, seating himself, looked down on the opposing shores of Asia and Europe, on the narrow line of the Hellespont, and on the open seas which lay to his right hand and his left. He beheld the land covered with his troops; he saw the waters glittering with the sails of ships which awaited his commands; while from side to side of the straits extended the two massive bridges by which he was to cross from the Lesser Asia into the meadows of the Thracian Chersonese. In that mighty host there was no handsomer or more majestic man than he; and for the time it must almost have seemed as if earth were doing homage to a present deity. To ascertain which of his subjects were the best mariners, he gave orders for a sailing match, in which the Phœnicians of Sidon distinguished themselves beyond all competitors. The situation was one which might well exalt the heart of a despotic monarch with pride and satisfaction. Xerxes pronounced himself happy, but not long after broke into a passion of tears. Artabanus, his paternal uncle, asked him the reason for this

XERXES CROSSING THE HELLESPONT.

change of mood, and Xerxes replied, "Commiseration seized me when I considered how brief is human life, since of these men, numerous as they are, not one shall survive to the hundredth year." Herodotus is the authority for this anecdote, which a modern writer has condemned as having no claim to be regarded as historical.* Nevertheless, it is so true to the deepest emotions of human nature, and is characterised by so sad and impressive a dignity, that history cannot afford to part with it. It is one of those heart-throbs which make themselves felt through ages, and are the witnesses of their own truth, because it is difficult to imagine their invention.

The passage of the Hellespont took place on the following day. As the sun rose into the heavens, the bridges were perfumed with frankincense, and strewn with myrtle. At the head of his multitudinous army, the Great King bowed before the solar orb, poured a libation from a golden goblet into the sea, and prayed to Mithra, the sun-god, that he might effect the conquest of Europe, even to its utmost limits. Then he cast the golden goblet into the waters, together with a golden bowl and a Persian scimitar. The Immortals were ordered to lead the way, and they crossed wearing garlands on their heads. Xerxes himself, his spearmen, his horsemen, and the sacred chariot, followed on the second day, traversing, like all of the army, the bridge nearest the Propontis. The baggage-animals and attendants proceeded by the bridge nearest the Ægean; and for seven days and nights these two streams of moving life continued, without a moment's intermission, to pass over the bridges from the shores of Asia to the shores of Europe. The pace of laggards was quickened by an unsparing use of the lash, for this form of punishment was frequently employed by the Persians, both on the march and on the field of battle. At length, the vast array of armed invaders stood on European soil, and the first portion of the great expedition was accomplished. The countless multitudes of men, the squadrons of ships, the bridges extending from shore to shore, and all the accessories of the movement, were calculated to make a vivid impression on the people who witnessed this amazing demonstration of Asiatic power and wealth. A Hellespontine Greek, who saw the passage of the army over the straits, is said to have addressed Xerxes as Zeus, or Jupiter, and to have asked him why, assuming the form of a Persian, he had brought all mankind with him to effect the conquest of Greece, since without those numbers it was in his power to do what he pleased.

As yet, Xerxes had encountered no opposition, because the whole of Thrace was in a state of vassalage to the Great King. The invaders, therefore, marched without any difficulty along the line of the coast, everywhere meeting with populations who, from whatever motives, were ready to proclaim their friendliness. On the extensive plain of Doriscus, west of the river Hebrus, the numbers of the land and naval forces were subjected to a species of rough computation; but no reliance can be placed upon the figures set forth with so much particularity by Herodotus. Some general idea of the aggregate of land troops has already been given; of vessels there are said to have been 1,207 triremes, and 3,000 smaller ships. After pausing at Doriscus, that he might thus acquire some definite conception of the force he led, Xerxes continued his march along the coast, receiving from all the principal cities a day's food for his soldiers, preparations for which gift had been made many months before. The higher classes had also to entertain the king and his suite at stately banquets, the cost of which was felt long afterwards as a heavy burden. The fleet, having sailed through the canal which had been cut through the peninsula of Mount Athos, was directed to double the promontories of Sithonia and Pallene, while Xerxes himself went by land to Therma (afterwards called Thessalonica), at the head of the Thermaic Gulf. The route to this city was not unattended by danger; for, during the night, lions, or some other savage animals, descended from the woody mountains, and devoured many of the camels. From Therma, after the arrival of the fleet, the army resumed its march, still keeping near the coast, until it reached the northern slopes of the Olympic range which separates Macedonia from Thessaly. A halt was now ordered, and preparations were made for crossing the mountain-barrier into the plains which lay beyond, and which constituted the northern part of Hellas Proper.

The actual risks of warfare were soon to be encountered, for up to this point the Persian king had marched only through territories which were subservient to his rule. But, during the halt, intelligence arrived which must have inspired Xerxes with the most happy auguries for the future. In the previous winter, a congress of the Grecian States, convened by Sparta and Athens, had been summoned to meet on the Isthmus of Corinth, to concert measures for the common defence against the threatened peril. The result of the consultation, however, was not

* Rawlinson's Five Great Monarchies of the Ancient Eastern World: Persia, chap. 7.

at all favourable to the prospects of Grecian freedom. North of the Isthmus of Corinth, the Athenians and the Phocians, together with the inhabitants of the small Bœotian towns of Platæa and Thespiæ, were the only people prepared to offer resistance to the despot. In the Peloponnesus, the Argives and the Achæans, both of whom detested the supremacy of Sparta, stood aloof, and even evinced a preference for the rule of Xerxes. The people of the islands and of the distant colonies showed indifference to the pressing needs of Hellas; and at least one-third of the Greek communities sent in to Xerxes the humiliating emblems of submission. The hopes of Greece rested mainly on Sparta and Athens. To the former was assigned the supreme command of the forces, both by sea and land; the latter, by a noble impulse of patriotism, concluded a peace with the people of Ægina, that there might be no division before the enemy. Themistocles employed his wonderful powers of eloquence in exhorting the Greeks of other States — though without much effect — to present a courageous front to the invader; and the confederates bound themselves by an oath to resist to the utmost extremity the endeavour of the Persian despot to destroy the liberties of Hellas, and the very essence of the national life.

It was at first determined to defend Thessaly by holding the narrow pass of Tempe; but this idea was relinquished on its being discovered that another defile existed a little to the west, by which troops could march across Mount Olympus. Thessaly was therefore abandoned to the enemy, and attention was directed to the pass of Thermopylæ, situated between the rocky mountains of Œta and a morass bordering on the Maliac Gulf of the Ægean. This path leads, by an oblique route, from Thessaly, on the north, into Locris and Phocis on the south, and is about a mile in length. Considerable changes have taken place in later days, but in the time of Xerxes the narrowest part of the defile was not many feet in breadth; indeed, at both extremities the mountains approached so near the marsh that there was room for but few persons abreast. The meaning of the name Thermopylæ is "the Gates of the Hot Springs," for at each end of the pass were springs of mineral water. The western mouth was near the Thessalian town of Anthela; the eastern lay close to the Locrian town of Alpeni; and between the two stretched a rugged tract of ground, wider than the outlets, yet still possessing no great dimensions. To the eastern of these outlets—that which was farthest from the advancing enemy—has been given the name of "the true Thermopylæ," because it was the more important of the two positions. The pass was further strengthened by a wall which, at some earlier date, the Phocians had built across the road, as a protection against marauders from Thessaly. Another advantage of the position was that the adjoining sea could be easily defended by a fleet, owing to the proximity of Eubœa, the northern end of which here contracts the Maliac Gulf to a narrow channel of two miles and a half. It was therefore determined to make a stand at Thermopylæ, and to employ both the land and the sea forces in a vigorous endeavour to stay the progress of the enemy.

The allied fleet was placed under the command of the Spartan Eurybiades, although more ships had been furnished by Athens than by any other city. To Sparta was also confided the supreme direction of the army; for the Athenians, as well as the other confederates, recognised, in a spirit of complete self-abnegation, the position of the Lacedæmonian monarchy as the leading Power in Greece. The station assigned to the fleet was at the northern end of Eubœa, in the roadstead of Artemisium, lying at the entrance to the Maliac Gulf. For the defence of Thermopylæ, a small band of Spartans was despatched under the command of one of their kings, Leonidas, the younger brother and successor of Cleomenes. It was thought that this force would be sufficient to hold so narrow a road until more could be sent; but for the present the bulk of the army was detained by the recurrence of the Olympic Games, and of the festival of the Carnean Apollo. Of Spartan freemen there were not more than three hundred, accompanied by a number of attendant Helots. Considerable additions to this force accrued upon the line of march, and also from the other Peloponnesian States; so that, in the end, nearly seven thousand fighting men were gathered in the neighbourhood of Thermopylæ. It was now about midsummer in the year 480 B.C.; and the season was at that time favourable to military operations. Xerxes, after staying for awhile on the northern side of Mount Olympus, reconnoitring the pass of Tempe and the open country beyond (where he found no signs of an enemy), crossed the heights by a road which his pioneers cut through the woods, and traversed Thessaly as far as the plain of Malis. Here he pitched his camp near the small town of Trachis, situated not far west of Thermopylæ. The fleet was to join him in the Maliac Gulf as soon as possible.

On arriving at the narrow defile which he was to defend, Leonidas learned that the post was not so secure as he had at first supposed. It appeared

that an unfrequented path led over Mount Œta from a point near Trachis, and, after following the gorge of the Asopus, and crossing Mount Callidromus, terminated in the rear of the Greek position. The Phocians revealed this track to the Spartan commander, and, at their own request, were stationed at the highest point, to repel any attempt to force a passage. Leonidas then repaired the Phocian wall which blocked the pass of Thermopylæ, and in which there was only one gateway. His actual position was behind the wall —that is to say, on the eastern side of it, since the enemy was to the west. Thus, the greater part of the defile was left open to the Persians, but presented an admirable trap, owing to its narrowness. On his right, Leonidas had the marshes and the sea; on his left the precipitous sides of Mount Callidromus. The position was really impregnable to direct attack from the land, and the adjacent channel was as yet free from Persian ships. The mountain path across Mount Œta, however, was a lurking peril, which dismayed some of those who served beneath the standard of the Spartan. The Peloponnesians suggested that the entire army should fall back upon the Isthmus of Corinth. But the Spartans, Phocians, and Locrians rejected such cowardly advice; and Leonidas, having sent messengers to various cities to beg speedy reinforcements, awaited the assault of Xerxes with quiet resolution, if not with hope.

Meanwhile, the Grecian fleet was lying at Artemisium. It consisted of 271 triremes, of which no fewer than a hundred had been furnished by Athens alone. The Athenian ships were commanded by Themistocles; but, as already stated, the entire naval force was under the directions of Eurybiades the Spartan. The Persian fleet was still in the Gulf of Therma, and ten of these Asiatic ships captured three of the Greek triremes which had been sent to reconnoitre the movements of the enemy. One effect of the disaster was to induce the Hellenes to abandon their naval station at Artemisium, and retire to the narrowest part of the Euripus, off Chalcis. The movement was ill-advised and precipitate, for it left Thermopylæ uncovered on that side which was flanked by the channel between the continent and the island of Eubœa. This change of position took place about the time that Xerxes fixed his camp at Trachis, in the Maliac plain. Fortunately for the Greeks, a storm prevented the Persian vessels from availing themselves of the advantage offered by the removal of the fleet under Eurybiades. The Persian admiral, discovering that the coast was clear, set sail from the Gulf of Therma, passed down the eastern shores of Magnesia—a long, curved peninsula forming part of Thessaly —and reached the headland of Sepias Acte, at the entrance of the Maliac Gulf. While lying here, the Persian fleet was visited by a fearful tempest, which raged three days and nights, inflicting a terrific loss of life and stores, and causing four hundred ships of war, with innumerable transports, to be cast away. On the subsidence of the storm, the remnants of the Persian fleet were anchored off Aphetæ, opposite Artemisium, and the Greeks, returning to their former station, captured fifteen of the adversary's vessels.

It was probably the delay in the arrival of his fleet which withheld Xerxes from making an immediate assault on the position of the Greeks at Thermopylæ. Herodotus says that he waited four days, in the hope that the Hellenes, seeing the enormous force by which they were opposed, would disperse without risking a battle; but it is more probable that his action was hampered by the absence of the naval force. On the fifth day his patience was exhausted, and he sent the Medes and Cissians, followed by the Immortals, into the jaws of the pass, where the Greeks were waiting to receive them. The attack was wholly ineffectual, and was repeated on the following day with no better fortune. The Greeks were much better armed, and clad in heavier panoply, than their foes; they stood in a position which rendered superior numbers of no avail; and they fought with that unflinching determination which love of country can alone inspire. The slaughter of the Persians was terrific, and Xerxes, who sat enthroned at the western end of the pass, leaped thrice upon his feet, with gestures of terror or of rage. It was not until the second day of the attack that he received information of the path across the mountains by which the rear of the Greek position might be approached. The fact was communicated to him by a Malian named Ephialtes, who has earned for himself an immortality of shame. This man offered to show the way, and a strong body of troops, under the Persian Hydarnes, was directed to follow him. They started at nightfall, and by daybreak had nearly reached the Phocian camp. In the perfect stillness of that hour, the sound of many feet, trampling the fallen leaves upon the side of the mountain, gave notice to the Phocian guard that they were surprised. The whole detachment retired precipitately before the advancing enemy, and the Persians continued their march without molestation towards the point which they had been instructed to attain.

The Greeks were now placed between two attacks: they had strong bodies of the adversary both in the front and in the rear; and it was hopeless to continue the struggle any longer on the ground which had been selected. During the night of the second day, Leonidas received information of this new movement of the Persian troops, by which his small band of heroes was being rapidly outflanked. He had still time to withdraw; but that was a course which a Spartan could not adopt without violating one of the strictest laws of his country, which directed that a soldier was to conquer at his post, or to die there. A council of war was held during the night, and a majority of the combatants were in favour of retreat. The resolution of the three hundred Spartans, however, was shared by seven hundred Thespians who formed part of the confederate army. The others marched from the ground, with the exception of four hundred Thebans, whom Leonidas had compelled the city unwillingly to furnish, and who were now forcibly detained, unless, according to a more generous hypothesis, they elected to share the fate of the rest. The total number of the Greeks remaining at Thermopylæ is generally believed to have been no more than fourteen hundred combatants; but to these must be added numerous Helots and other attendants, and it is possible that the figures altogether have been understated.

The main body of the Persians at the western end of the pass resumed their attack on the following day, under the direct command of Xerxes, as before. It was calculated that by this time the detachment of Hydarnes would have reached the eastern end of the defile, so that the two assaults might be simultaneous; but Leonidas, knowing that victory was impossible, and wishing simply to meet death after the most heroic fashion, took the offensive himself, and, passing through the Phocian wall, advanced into the more open ground. Falling like a thunderbolt upon the Persians, the little band of fourteen hundred Greeks slew many of their foes, and swept others into the marshes and the sea. The Asiatic hosts became disorganised, trampled on one another in their wild and desultory movements, and could with difficulty be brought to face their antagonists. For a long while the Greeks maintained their ranks unbroken; but at length their numbers were thinned, their spears shattered, and themselves steadily driven back into the narrower part of the gorge. Leonidas fell early in the fight, and the battle raged fiercely over his corpse, of which the Persians endeavoured to obtain possession. Four times they were repulsed; but the issue of so unequal a combat was apparent from the first. The remnants of the band withdrew behind the Phocian wall, and seated themselves on a hillock. Just then, the detachment under Hydarnes was seen approaching from the south-east. At the same time, the main body of the Persians under Xerxes burst through the wall, and united with their comrades. The Thebans protested that they had been obliged to fight against their will, and, begging for quarter, were permitted to live, though their persons were branded as royal slaves. The others were speedily surrounded, and slain to a man by a shower of missiles which was poured upon them.

Towards the close of this terrific struggle, few of the remaining Greeks possessed any weapons; yet they continued to fight desperately with hands and teeth. So deadly had been the encounter in its earlier stages, that two brothers of Xerxes, together with many Persian nobles, were numbered among the slain; and when the king viewed the dead bodies of his subjects, his rage was so extreme that he ordered the corpse of Leonidas to be beheaded and hung upon a cross—a savage indignity, entirely opposed to the ordinary habits of the Persians. The other Greeks were buried on the spot, and monuments were afterwards erected to their memory, with inscriptions testifying to the valour and self-devotion with which they had met their fate. The principal of these monuments was a marble lion, erected on the hillock where the Greeks made their last stand, and dedicated to the immortal honour of Leonidas. Xerxes had received his first lesson in the valour and constancy with which at least some portion of the Greek people was inspired; and Demaratus, the deposed Spartan monarch, who accompanied the Persian king on his expedition, told him, as they were looking at the dead bodies of the heroes, that there were thousands of citizens left, every one of whom was ready to do and to endure the same. Great, and deservedly great, was the fame of Leonidas and his companions for their conduct on that memorable day. Equally great, and equally deserved, was the infamy which overwhelmed the name of Ephialtes. After the invasion had been repelled, the Amphictyons set a price upon the head of the traitor, and he was ultimately slain by a private enemy.

The struggle at Thermopylæ was closely followed by a naval fight at Artemisium. Much irresolution still prevailed amongst the officers and men of the Greek navy; and when they found that, notwithstanding the enormous loss of Persian ships in the recent storm, a formidable

number yet remained, it was again considered prudent to seek a position more easily defended. The Eubœans, however, bribed Themistocles, by a sum of thirty talents, to persuade the other commanders to stay; and this he did by giving some portion of the money to his companions. A sudden attack upon the Persian fleet was rewarded by the capture of thirty vessels; but the action, which began at dusk, closed after nightfall without any very decisive result. Another terrific storm now fell upon the coasts, but in such a direction that the Persians suffered far more than the Greeks. Two hundred Persian ships, which were sailing round Eubœa to cut off the retreat of the Hellenes, were completely destroyed near the eastern coast of that island. On the following day, while the Greeks were rejoicing over this incident—which seemed to them like a direct interposition of the gods, since storms are not usual in Greece at that season of the year—an addition of fifty-three ships arrived from Athens. The courage and hopefulness of the patriots were now greatly strengthened; but the Persians, though suffering in so serious a degree, determined to make one final effort to achieve a naval triumph. A day later, their squadrons sailed towards Artemisium in the form of a crescent, and a prolonged and sanguinary battle ensued, in which the losses on both sides, in ships as well as in men, were excessive. The Asiatics, however, could better endure these disasters than the Greeks, and the latter found it necessary to retreat along the Eubœan channel, and, after doubling the promontory of Sunium, to take up a fresh position near the island of Salamis.

The Greeks had evidently hoped that the Persian inroad would be stopped, either at the pass of Tempe or at that of Thermopylæ, and that their fleet would be able to repel the naval force of Xerxes. When all these anticipations broke down, and the whole of Northern Greece lay beneath the heel of the invader, great was the dismay which followed. The situation was indeed alarming in the highest degree. All those States which had long inclined to the Persian alliance gave in their submission to the conqueror. Thebes and other Bœotian cities received garrisons from the Persian sovereign, and the people of the Peloponnesus, believing that the most they could do would be to save their own peninsula, confined their efforts to the fortification of the Corinthian Isthmus. Athens lay

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completely open to the vengeance of the Persians. Xerxes might arrive there in six days, and there was every reason to fear that he would destroy the city and massacre the inhabitants. An assembly of the people was convened, and it was resolved that homesteads should be dismantled, that property should be abandoned, and that the population should embark in the fleet, to find a refuge where they could. The real destination of the Grecian ships was Trœzen, in Argolis; but they had stopped at Salamis, and were now persuaded to remain long enough to take on board the Athenian families and their effects. Many resisted the edict for their expatriation; but Themistocles, by the production of several responses from the oracle at Delphi, so worked upon the religious feelings of the people that they at length consented to depart. Some found a home in Ægina, some in the island of Salamis, but the greater number in Trœzen. A few, however, still clung to their native city, and, trusting in the literal interpretation of an oracle which had declared that, "when all was lost, a wooden wall should still shelter the Athenians," shut themselves up in the Acropolis, and fortified its western front, which was held to be alone accessible, with barricades of timber. Patriotism increased with the terrible necessities of the hour. The rich were ready with their money, and all with their most earnest efforts to promote the common safety. That political dissensions might be extinguished, Themistocles proposed a decree revoking all sentences of banishment, and Aristides returned to the State which his virtues had adorned, and which he now found in the agonies of an impending crisis.

The Persian army under Xerxes was by this time in full march towards the south. On entering Phocis, it was seen that the people of that small State had abandoned their cities, several of which the invaders demolished. Thespiæ and Platæa, the only towns of Bœotia which had refused submission to the Great King, were also sacked and destroyed, and Xerxes sent a detachment of his army to plunder Delphi. This, however, was a feat beyond their power to accomplish; for one of the most profound beliefs of the Hellenic world was so outraged by the contemplated profanity, that priests and citizens united to defend the temple of the god. The semblance of divine portents was not wanting to encourage the people to the most desperate resistance; and it is related that, as the Persians were making their way up the slopes of Mount Parnassus, two crags, probably detached by

GREEK TRIREMES AT THE BATTLE OF SALAMIS.

lightning, or by an earthquake, rolled down on them, and spread dismay among their ranks. The result was that they fled in terror, and the Greeks always believed that a divine interposition had accomplished the discomfiture of the marauders. This incident did not affect the main current of events. Xerxes speedily arrived before Athens, and found the Acropolis occupied by the citizens who had put their confidence in the oracular response about the wooden wall. The place was formidable, both by nature and art, and the Persians refrained at first from a direct assault. Taking up a position on the Areopagus, opposite the north-western side of the Acropolis, they assailed the timber fortifications with arrows carrying lighted tow. When these were destroyed, they attempted to mount by the western side; but the defenders flung down upon them huge stones which they had detached from the rock. Ultimately, however, the Persians succeeded in climbing the northern side, which, being very precipitous, had not been guarded. The temples and houses on the Acropolis were pillaged and burned; the occupants were slaughtered; and Athens was in complete possession of the invader. Perhaps it should rather be said that its site was in his possession; for the city itself was destroyed by fire and sword, and by the brute violence of an infuriated host.

By September, the Persian fleet had arrived at Phalerum, the port of Athens, and an intervening promontory was the only barrier between the navy of Xerxes and that of Greece, which still lay in the Bay of Salamis. The number of the Persian ships is not exactly known, but it was probably no fewer than a thousand. On the other hand, the Greeks had assembled between three and four hundred vessels in the vicinity of Athens—a larger number than were arrayed at Artemisium, yet a force far inferior to that which obeyed the commands of Xerxes. A council of war was held by the Persians, at which it was determined to give battle to the Grecian fleet on the following day, and at the same time the army was despatched along the Isthmus of Corinth in the direction of the Peloponnesus. Serious differences of opinion existed among the commanders of the Grecian fleet, and the suggestion of Themistocles, that the ships should remain at Salamis, so that the impending battle might take place in a narrow sea, where superior numbers would be wholly ineffective, was violently opposed by the Peloponnesian commanders, who were of opinion that the fleet should be removed to the Isthmus of Corinth, and thus put in communication with the land forces. Violent disputes took place between Themistocles and the other commanders; but the rhetoric, and to some extent the threats, of the great Athenian ultimately prevailed. It was determined to endure the brunt of the Persian attack at Salamis; but the Peloponnesians, influenced by messages from their own cities, exhibited on the following day so strong a disinclination to follow out the plan which had been settled on the previous night, that Themistocles, after another scene of altercation, fell back upon a stratagem for the attainment of his ends. Among his slaves was an Asiatic Greek named Sicinnus, who was well acquainted with the Persian tongue. This man was despatched with a message to Xerxes, informing him of the dissensions which existed in the Grecian fleet, and representing that a victory might be easily won under such circumstances. Whether Themistocles was really influenced by any treacherous design may perhaps be a question, since his character was certainly not equal to his abilities; but his ostensible motive, and perhaps also his true intention, was to force on an engagement before the Peloponnesian vessels could leave the Bay of Salamis. The device proved successful. Xerxes ordered his admirals to close up the southern end of the Salaminian Strait, while a detachment was sent round the island to guard the channel at its western extremity. These movements took place after nightfall, and, at a late hour, Themistocles received a visit from his old rival, Aristides, who came to tell him that the Grecian fleet was completely surrounded by the Persians, and that his own vessel had eluded them simply by favour of the darkness.

This intelligence was received by the Grecian commanders with incredulity; but, as the day began to dawn, the Persian line of battle was perceived extending along the coast of Attica until its numbers were lost in the distance. Its right wing lay towards the Bay of Eleusis, north of the island of Salamis; its left was towards Phalerum, near the southern entrance of the straits. On a barren islet off the north-east point of Salamis, a detachment of Persian troops had been landed, and the Grecian fleet, which was drawn up in the harbour of the town of Salamis, situated on the eastern side of the island, appeared caught in a trap. The ensuing combat was fought under the eyes of Xerxes himself, who sat upon a royal throne which had been planted for him on one of the rocky declivities of the mainland, opposite the harbour where the Grecian fleet was preparing for the attack. At the sound of the trumpet, the Hellenes rowed towards their antagonists, shouting the war-song to Apollo, to which the Persians responded by exclamations of their own. A temporary panic

amongst the former was speedily overcome, and in after times it was related that a female figure of divine proportions was seen to hover over the fleet, reproaching the combatants for their hesitation. Battle was soon joined, and the opposing ships were mingled in inextricable confusion. The anticipations of Themistocles were speedily realised, as the Persian commanders found that in so confined a space their very numbers were a source of weakness. With no room in which to manœuvre, and no opportunity for concerted action, the vast array of Persian ships simply embarrassed one another. The motley composition of the Asiatic fleet, which consisted of Persian, Phœnician, Egyptian, Cyprian, Ionian, and other vessels, was an additional cause of trouble when the whole navy came into contact with one which, whatever the dissensions among the commanders, was still united by a common nationality. The Ionian ships serving under the Persian flag were very doubtful allies of the Great King; for the sailors, feeling that they were Greeks themselves, fought with little animation against men of their own blood. The other contingents maintained the battle with great spirit; but their efforts were in vain, as the conditions of the combat were not favourable to success. The Asiatic fleet had been drawn up in triple line; and when the first of these lines was broken and driven back, the other two were unable to advance, while the land in their rear forbade retreat. Oars and helms were splintered; the ordered squadrons were reduced to a chaotic and helpless mass; and at the same time the Greeks preserved their organization, and presented a firm, unwavering front to the shattered and astounded enemy. The battle was manifestly lost to the Persians, and it was not long before defeat passed into rout. One of the subject monarchs who accompanied Xerxes was Artemisia, Queen of Halicarnassus, in Caria, who, although opposed to fighting in so narrow a channel, exhibited remarkable courage in the conduct of her ship. When, however, a disorderly flight set in, she retreated with the rest, pursued by the Athenian Aminias, who did not know that the ship before him was that of the Carian queen, for whose capture, as a traitress to the Hellenic nationality, the Athenians had offered a large reward. The ship of another Carian lay in her path: she sank it with all its crew, and escaped into more open waters, where Aminias, taking the act as a sign of desertion to the Greeks, did not pursue her. One of the Persian courtiers, believing that the vessel she had destroyed belonged to the Grecian fleet, said to Xerxes, "Seest thou, Master, how well Artemisia fights?" "Yes," replied the king; "my men behave like women, my women like men."

The Persian vessels were now in full retreat, but escape was not easy. The Athenian vessels drove the routed squadrons down the strait in the direction of Phalerum, where the Æginetans were waiting to receive them, and to sink as many as they could bring within their range. The sea was scattered all over with wrecks, and with drowning men who vainly endeavoured to preserve their lives. On the neighbouring island, the Persian troops were exterminated, Aristides having taken across some soldiers who had been left as a guard at Salamis. The number of vessels lost on both sides cannot be stated with any precision; but on the side of the Persians it doubtless amounted to some hundreds. The Greek loss was comparatively small, yet it was not insignificant. The destruction of life was likewise terrible, and Xerxes had to mourn a third brother, in addition to the two who had already fallen at Thermopylæ. Yet, in spite of all disasters, the Persian fleet still greatly outnumbered that of Greece, and it was expected that in a little while the attack would be renewed. But Xerxes had received so severe a lesson that his former confidence gave way to despair. He doubted the fidelity of many among the tributary vessels, and was so wildly enraged against the Phœnicians, whom he accused of cowardice and incompetency, that they sought safety in flight. This deprived the king of a large portion of his naval force, and, although his army was still unimpaired, and had not suffered any grave reverses, a feeling of doubt and hesitation took possession of his mind, and he determined on retreat. Mardonius, who had been one of his principal commanders, advised a further prosecution of hostilities; but, while granting to his lieutenant permission to conduct a series of operations on his own responsibility, he himself could not be persuaded to remain in a country where his forces, and even his life, were in peril. The fleet was accordingly despatched towards the Hellespont, to guard the bridges of boats by which the king, accompanied by a large part of his army, was to return to Asia.

The retiring ships were pursued as far as the island of Andros, the people of which, having sided with Xerxes, were treated with great rigour by Themistocles, who endeavoured to extort money from them for the gratification of his own cupidity. They were too poor to answer the demand; but Themistocles indemnified himself in other places, which he subjected to his extortionate edicts.

After a while, the Grecian fleet returned to Salamis, but not before Themistocles, in the prosecution of a tortuous policy which can hardly be explained on any hypothesis favourable to his good faith, had again addressed himself to Xerxes, telling him that out of personal friendship he had restrained the Greeks from destroying the communications over the Hellespont. Whatever effect this message may have had upon the mind of the Persian monarch, it did not delay his march towards the shores of Asia. Five and forty days elapsed before the Hellespont was reached, and, as the stores of food had been used up during the advance, the sufferings of the troops, though probably exaggerated by Æschylus (who had been present at the battle of Salamis, and afterwards wrote a drama on the subject), were doubtless very considerable. On reaching the shores of the Thracian Chersonesus, in the latter part of the autumn, Xerxes found that his bridges had been blown away by a storm; but his fleet was at hand to carry him across to Asia, and he reached Sardis about eight months after he had started on an expedition which began with the greatest splendour, and seemed to promise the most triumphant results. His army was sadly thinned by diseases caused by excess immediately following on the privations of the march from Athens to the Hellespont; and there was little which either officers or men could recall with complacency. The credit of the Persian arms might yet be retrieved under the directions of Mardonius; but Xerxes himself, who had left Asia as a god, attended by the worship and the acclamations of innumerable flatterers, returned to it as a crestfallen and humiliated man.

CHAPTER XXXI.

CARTHAGE AND SICILY.

Phœnicia in the Ancient World—Sidon and Tyre—Commerce and Maritime Enterprise of the Phœnicians—Colonies of Phœnician Origin—Founding of Carthage—Growth of the Power and Influence of that City—Nature of the Government—The Suffetes, or Judges—The Senate, Council, Pentarchies, and High Court of Judicature—Character of the Constitution mainly Aristocratical—Extent of Carthaginian Commerce and Enterprise—Composition of the Carthaginian Armies—Colonies and Foreign Possessions of Carthage—Religion, Morals, and Local Habits—Friendly Feeling between Carthage and Tyre—Early Collisions of Carthaginians and Greeks—Gelo, Tyrant of Syracuse—His Attempt to expel the Carthaginians from Sicily—Invasion of the Greek Colonies of Sicily by Hamilcar of Carthage—Siege of Himera—Vigorous Action of Gelo, and Defeat of the Carthaginians—Mysterious Death of Hamilcar—Terms of Peace between Carthage and the Sicilian Greeks—Hiero of Syracuse—Greek Rejoicings for the Success at Salamis—Distribution of Honours—Movement against the Persians in the Chalcidian Peninsula—Capture of Olynthus by Artabazus—Defeat of Artabazus before Potidæa—Ascendency of the Grecian Cause.

WHILE the main body of the Hellenic nationality was being threatened by the enormous armaments of Xerxes, one of the Greek colonies was undergoing attack from another great military Power, whose operations, however, proceeded from a different direction. To understand this latter contest in all its bearings, we must divert our attention for awhile from the course of Greek history, and trace the double development—in Asia and in Africa—of a very conspicuous people.

Frequent allusion has already been made to the Phœnicians—a community of mixed Hamite and Semitic origin, inhabiting a narrow strip of country on the shores of the Mediterranean, in the north-western part of Canaan. The Phœnicians were maritime and commercial in their habits, and indeed could scarcely have subsisted in any other way, for their territorial possessions were very slight, being shut in, at a little distance from the sea, by the mountain ranges of Lebanon. Phœnicia Proper extended from a point about six miles south of Tyre to a point two miles north of Sidon. This gave a length of not more than twenty-eight miles, with an average breadth of only a mile, and at the greatest of only five miles. Afterwards, the boundaries of the country were enlarged, so as to reach a hundred and twenty miles in length, and twenty miles in breadth when at the utmost. But even these were small dimensions for a State, and the energies of the Phœnicians were compelled to find an outlet on the sea. For purposes of trade, the land was admirably situated. The long reaches of the Mediterranean lay in front, giving easy access to some of the most productive regions of the globe. Close at hand were the great Asiatic Monarchies, and the splendid African dominion on the Nile.

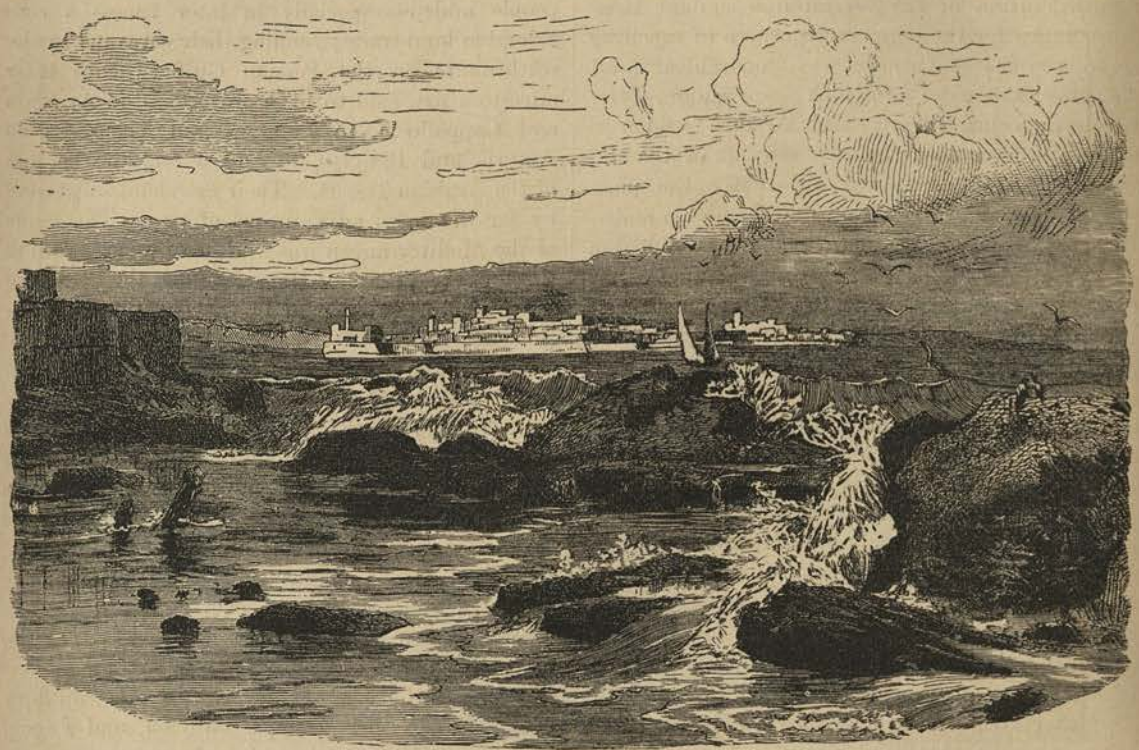
The coast-line of Phœnicia presented several excellent harbours, with sufficient depth of water for the moderate-sized vessels of the ancient world; and the neighbouring forests of Lebanon yielded ample material for building ships. Accordingly, the Phœnician was a merchant and a sailor. His galleys explored distant coasts, where others did not dare to go; and wealth flowed to him from many sources.

Small as was the country of Phœnicia, it was at no time under one government, nor was there even a confederation of the several independent kingdoms, unless for the temporary purpose of repelling invasion. The constitution was monarchical in all the cities, the chief of which were Sidon, Tyre, Berytus, Byblus, Tripolis, and Aradus. Sidon is believed to have been the most ancient of the six, and, before 1050 B.C., was apparently the most prosperous community within the Phœnician limits. Tyre may have been in the first instance a Sidonian colony: at any rate, it became the principal of the Phœnician cities after 1050 B.C. The kingdom of Tyre was famous in the early world. It was a great commercial emporium, trading with the East and with the West, and forming a kind of centre to the two. With the exception of Sidon, there had been no earlier instance of a State founded solely upon trade; and its wealth and power ensured the respect of the surrounding monarchies, which were all of a military character. The original site of Tyre was on the mainland; but at a very early period another city of the same name was built on a small, narrow island, nearly half a mile distant from the shore, with which it is now connected by a mole made by Alexander the Great. The latter is the city of which we read in the Bible. It was there that the Tyrian monarchs and the Tyrian nobles lived in luxurious splendour: it was thence that the costly stuffs of Tyrian purple were exported to all the countries of the civilised world. The priestly order had great power and influence at Tyre, and in the other Phœnician cities. Various forms of idolatry entered into the popular belief, the general character of which was Pantheistical. The sun, the moon, and the five planets were objects of worship, and, in its highest conception, the religion may have been blameless. But in effect it degenerated into cruel and licentious practices, and the example of the Phœnicians was one of the corrupting influences to which the Jews were exposed.

It was chiefly as carriers of the commodities of other nations that the Phœnicians acquired a great position as merchants, for they had not many productions of their own to barter for the raw material or the manufactures of foreign lands. Nevertheless, they were not entirely wanting in this respect. The celebrated purple dye, which they obtained from two varieties of shell-fish frequenting the coast, gave an extraordinary value to their textile fabrics. They are said to have been the inventors of glass, and at any rate were known at an early period to have manufactured several articles in that beautiful substance. Their works in gold, silver, and bronze were highly esteemed, and their architects enjoyed a reputation beyond the narrow boundaries of Phœnicia. To their maritime commerce, these people added—especially in later times—a considerable land-trade; sending their caravans to the settlements on the Persian Gulf (whence their ancestors are said to have proceeded), to Armenia and Cappadocia, to Palmyra and Thapsacus, to Assyria and Babylon, to Judæa and the borders of the Arabian Desert. Their merchant-ships were by far the most adventurous of any. The whole of the Mediterranean was known to them. Sailing through the Pillars of Hercules (now the Straits of Gibraltar), they explored in the one direction the remotest shores of Africa, and in the other the western coasts of Europe to the Scilly Isles and the peninsula of Cornwall, where they traded for tin. In the north, they penetrated the Euxine; in the south-east, they found their way to distant parts of Arabia, to India, and to Ceylon. It has even been supposed that their mariners entered the Baltic in quest of amber; and some bold speculators have imagined that they sailed out into the Atlantic, and reached the continent of America. But these are the dreams of hypothesis—not the ascertained facts of history.

The collisions of Phœnicia with the military empires of Assyria, Egypt, Babylon, and Persia, and its relations with Judæa, have already been described. The country lost its independence before the overpowering might of greater monarchies, and, although revolts took place from time to time, and freedom was recovered during brief intervals, Phœnicia occupied the position of a subject province—enjoying, however, a certain amount of local autonomy—from about the year 850 B.C. downwards. At the period we have reached, it was tributary to Persia, and compelled to furnish a large portion of the fleet with which Xerxes invaded Greece. But, long before that time, the great commercial cities of Phœnicia had planted several colonies in various parts of the world, some of which attained great eminence. Communities of Phœnician origin were established in many islands of the Mediterranean, and others were to be found on the shores of the Persian Gulf, on the northern coast of Africa, and in Spain. The

influence of Phœnicia upon primitive Greece has been discussed on an earlier page. It may not have been equal to what at one time was supposed; yet it can hardly be doubted that settlers from this land found their way into Hellas, carrying with them a knowledge of the alphabet, and the practice of some useful arts. The greatest of the Phœnician colonies, however, was that of Carthage, with which we are now concerned, and which perpetuated on a larger scale the magnificent traditions of the parent State.



SYRACUSE.

The site of Carthage was a peninsula running in an easterly direction into the Gulf of Tunis, and connected with the mainland by an isthmus of about a mile in breadth. The older Phœnician colonies of Tunes, Utica, Hippo, and Hadrumetum, were not far off; so that the beginners of Carthage (who probably left their native country owing to political differences) did not find themselves entirely among strangers. The date at which the settlement was formed is uncertain. The Alexandrian author, Appian, says that Carthage was built in 1234 B.C.; but a more likely period is somewhere between 871 and 824—probably about 850. An old tradition stated that the city was founded by Elissa, or Dido, who, after the murder of her husband by his brother-in-law, Pygmalion, King of Tyre, fled with many adherents and citizens to the north of Africa. This princess obtained possession of a piece of ground, and erected on it some buildings, to which she gave the name of Bozra (a fortress), afterwards changed by the Greeks into Byrsa (a hide). The latter appellation doubtless suggested the story that Dido—a heroine associated with Æneas in the great poem of Virgil—required from the Libyans as much land as could be encompassed by a bull's hide, and that, by cutting the hide into narrow thongs, she managed to enclose a good-sized piece of territory. The citadel of Bozra grew in time into the great metropolis known to us as Carthage—the Roman adaptation of a name which appears to have signified "New City." It is probable that the aborigines of that part of Africa received the Phœnician colonists in a friendly spirit, and that the newcomers paid a fixed rent for the ground they occupied. Accordingly, they had not to struggle for existence, and their progress was uninterrupted, though perhaps slow.

The command of some excellent harbours gave to the founders of Carthage those opportunities for traffic which, as Phœnicians, they required. Another advantage was to be found in the adjacent country, which possessed a fertile soil, and was peopled by

nomadic tribes not unwilling to unite with the colonists, and to receive the elements of civilisation from a people far in advance of themselves. These native Libyans made good agriculturists when reclaimed from the wandering life of the desert, and Phœnician communities from Carthage settled among them, effecting intermarriages which resulted in a mixed race of great capacity and vigour. The sway of Carthage reached even farther south than the territory of the Libyan tribes, and included a large number of barbarians who, while a sort of federation arose, of which Carthage was the head.

Our information with respect to Carthage is very far from commensurate with the importance of the city in the ancient world. Some Carthaginian inscriptions have been discovered in modern times; but they throw no light on history. The native chronicles which existed at the era of the Roman conquest have now perished, and no Latin author appears to have taken the pains to translate them. Herodotus says very little about Carthage, and

SOPHOCLES LEADING THE CHORUS OF YOUTHS.

never entirely yielding to the authority of the strangers, were in some degree moulded to their purposes. By ancient writers, the more immediate dominion of Carthage was held to extend as far as Lake Triton in the south, and to the river Tusca in the west, while to the north and east it was bordered by the Mediterranean. Its limits, therefore, were nearly the same as those of the modern province of Tunis; but the Carthaginians, gradually pushing beyond these boundaries, advanced their power over all the coast-tribes between the Tusca and the Pillars of Hercules, and, in a south-easterly direction, to the neighbourhood of the Greek colonies of Cyrenaica. As the city grew in strength, it acquired a predominant influence over the other African settlements of Phœnician parentage, and several of the other Greek writers on this subject exist only in the form of fragments. Aristotle, however, has left us, in the Second Book of his "Politics," a rather full account of the national institutions. The government of Carthage was essentially municipal: the city was supreme over the outlying territory. This is equivalent to saying that the men of Phœnician race retained in their own hands the whole conduct of affairs, from which the native Libyans, and even the people of mixed blood, were excluded. A very aristocratical spirit pervaded the administration, which was republican in form, and of which the chief authority was vested in a Senate, consisting of the heads of a few rich and powerful families, who divided the chief offices of State among themselves, together with others of

equal opulence and standing. Nominally, all Carthaginians of the Phœnician stock were eligible for every office but the two highest; but, practically, none but the affluent could serve, owing to the circumstance that no salary was attached to any of these public functions. It appears from the testimony of Aristotle that bribery extensively prevailed among the Carthaginians, and that offices were bought and sold. The citizens were frequently treated to banquets in the *curiæ*, or political clubs, and the object of this corruption was of course to influence the votes of those who determined the elections. Thus, the poor, though they might to some extent choose their rulers, were precluded from all positions of authority, and an oligarchy of wealth was created in the very bosom of the State.

The two principal officers of the Republic were the Suffetes, or Judges, who were originally charged with the command of the army, as well as with the administration of civil affairs, but whose duties were afterwards confined to the latter. They could be chosen only from certain privileged families, and were probably elected for life. Owing, doubtless, to this irremovability, the Greek and Roman authors call the Suffetes by the title of kings; but they were in truth a kind of presidents, whose power, seemingly, did not revert to the people. They ruled over the deliberations of the Senate, and laid before that body their reports on public affairs. The Senate, consisting of not more than a hundred members, was a select committee of the Council, which numbered several hundreds. From this Council proceeded also the Pentarchies, or Commissions of five members each, which managed the several departments of State, and filled up vacancies. The High Court of Judicature was elected by the people, or rather, as a matter of fact, by the rich; and this was almost the only check upon the selfishness of the aristocracy which the constitution allowed. If, however, the Suffetes and the Council differed on any public question, an appeal was made to the citizens themselves, and it would appear that with them lay the appointment of the military commanders, when the Suffetes no longer had control of the army. The political character of the State was therefore not entirely devoid of democratical elements, though the predominant quality was decidedly aristocratical. Privilege was strongly guarded among these merchant-princes; yet the mass of the people were contented. Extreme poverty was unknown, for any excess of population was at once drafted off to new colonies. Trade was open to all, and with the acquisition of wealth came the title to peculiar honours. The results were seen in a government distinguished by skill and success, and in a state of domestic tranquillity which long endured. Up to the time of Aristotle—in the fourth century B.C.—Carthage had never fallen beneath the power of a despot, or been torn by civil commotions. It was not until the later ages of the Republic that violent factions arose, with their accompaniments of popular disturbance.

The armies of Carthage consisted largely of mercenaries, so that the national expenditure was very heavy. The revenue was derived partly from State property, such as mines; partly from tribute paid by the confederated cities and the conquered provinces; and partly from customs, which were imposed on all alike. The tribute varied in proportion to the exigencies of the time, and was sometimes so excessive as to amount to fifty per cent. on the incomes of those who furnished it. None but a very rich community could have borne such severe exactions; but the people of Carthage, like their Tyrian ancestors, knew the road to wealth. The commerce of the citizens was great and remunerative. In the east, it extended to Phœnicia; in the west, to Madeira, the Canaries, and the coast of Guinea; in the south, to Fezzan, or beyond; and in the north-west, to Britain. The basis of this immense trade was a system of monopolies; but, bad as that system was and always is, it had at any rate the advantage of effecting a large interchange of products among many widely-separated regions. Nothing daunted the enterprise of a Carthaginian merchant. His ships were seen visiting every port of the Mediterranean, or skirting the abysses of the vast and mysterious Atlantic. His agents explored the African desert in search of customers or commodities, penetrated to the Nile and the Niger, and invaded the oases which dot the levels of barren and intolerable sand. To the marts of these speculators came oil and wine from Sicily and Southern Italy; linen and fine cloth from Malta; wax, honey, and slaves from Corsica; iron from Elba; mules and fruit from the Balearic Isles; tin from the mines of Cornwall; gold from the vicinity of the Niger; precious stones and negroes from the interior of Africa; and elephants' teeth and hides from the western coasts of that great continent which is still but imperfectly known to civilisation. Trading factories and colonies were established in various directions, and Carthage was acknowledged to be the most considerable Power in that portion of the world.

The imports of the Carthaginians were not entirely for their own use and consumption. Their trade was partly a carrying trade, and what they

obtained from one country they often bartered to another. The produce of the Spanish mines, which were in their possession, furnished them with a very large revenue. Gold and silver were the standards of value, but it is doubtful whether the metal was ever coined. Manufactures were carried on by the citizens, and mechanical arts were practised with success. But the strength of Carthage consisted, next to its commerce, in the large military forces which the Republic could wield for the prosecution of its designs. The native levies were augmented, in early times, by the mixed race sprung from the union of the Phœnicians with the Libyans, and afterwards by the several nationalities which the Carthaginians conquered, or with which they came in contact. Under the generals of this commercial State were Numidians and Mauritanians, swarthy from the fervour of the African sun; negroes from the parching desert; Iberians from Spain, Celts from Gaul, Ligurians from Northern Italy. It would thus appear that the bulk of the army consisted of foreigners; but the officers were all Carthaginians, and every military force comprised a picked body of 2,500 citizens, selected for their rank, wealth, and valour, and externally distinguished by splendid armour. The rest were variously armed and clad, some presenting the appearance of civilised warriors, and others of savage hordes. Whenever the safety of the Republic itself was menaced, all the citizens were called to arms; but under ordinary circumstances the Carthaginian employed himself in commerce, and trusted to his wealth for purchasing the soldiers who would fight his battles.

To the army was added a powerful navy, consisting of numerous large ships, the rowers of which were public slaves, bought in the interior of Africa. By their land and sea forces, the Carthaginians acquired a vast territory, and were ultimately enabled to contest the empire of the world with Rome itself. At an early date they took possession of Melita (Malta), Gaulos (Gozo), and the Balearic and Lipari Islands. Western Sicily received a few Carthaginian colonies, and Sardinia was conquered (after some unsuccessful attempts, in which much blood was expended) at the latter end of the sixth century B.C. Subsequently, possessions were obtained in Corsica, in Spain, in Madeira, and in the Canaries; and the Greeks of Sicily were confronted by a formidable opponent. The first Carthaginian conqueror on record was Mago, who freed his countrymen from all further payment of rent to the Libyans for the ground on which stood the original citadel. We find the name of Mago repeated in after times; and the names of Hasdrubal Hamilcar, and Hannibal are also of frequent occurrence—a fact which is of course to be attributed to the great commands in the Carthaginian Republic being generally held by the leading families of the State. The military genius of these traffickers was far from inconsiderable. Mercantile communities are often warlike, and with the people of Carthage the mart did not entirely supersede the camp.

The religion of the Carthaginians was similar to that of their Phœnician ancestors. Melcarth, the Tyrian Hercules, was the tutelar deity of the city. By some he has been identified with Baal and the sun; by others, with the Assyrian Bel and the planet Jupiter. Ashtoreth, or Astarte, the goddess of the moon, was another of the Carthaginian deities; and children of noble families, together with captives taken in war, were immolated on the shrine of Moloch. These sacrifices were offered by the highest persons in the State, for it is doubtful whether the Carthaginians had any sacerdotal caste. Various Genii and Heroes were likewise worshipped, and in a lofty part of the city a magnificent temple was erected to Esmun, or Æsculapius. Great respect was shown to parents, and the conjugal tie appears to have been treated with reverence. During their time of office, the magistrates were required to abstain from wine; but amongst other classes a good deal of revelry was permitted. Offenders were punished with merciless severity, and crucifixion was a common mode of death. The Carthaginians were great agriculturists, and the country about their city was made fertile by the labour of slaves. The ground was copiously irrigated; the fields were covered with herds of cattle; vineyards and olive-gardens were numerous; and the gentry passed their leisure hours in country seats of great richness and beauty. When at her height of dominion, evidences of the prosperity of Carthage were to be seen on every hand; indeed, it was not long before this African Republic surpassed in power and glory the Phœnician State from which it had arisen. Yet, although there may have been political differences in the first instance, it is to the credit of the Carthaginians that they always retained a filial sentiment towards their Tyrian progenitors. When the latter were besieged by the Babylonians, about 600 B.C., and when, at a later period, Tyre was conquered by Alexander the Great, Carthage afforded a refuge to the women, children, and old men of the parent city.

It was impossible that two such energetic races as the Carthaginians and the Greeks could prosecute their enterprises in the same general directions without speedily coming into collision. The shores of the Mediterranean, north and south, were coveted

by both, as offering advantageous seats for their colonies; and it followed of necessity that a state of war should arise as soon as the two rivals approached near enough to one another to arouse mutual jealousy. Towards the middle of the sixth century B.C., the Phocæans opened a trade with Tartessus, a town of Spain supposed to be the Tarshish of the Hebrew Scriptures. The same Hellenic people also founded Massalia (now Marseilles), near the mouths of the Rhone, and attempted to form colonies in Corsica. The Carthaginians regarded these movements as so many intrusions upon their own sphere of action, and in alliance with the Tyrrhenians, or people of Etruria, destroyed the Phocæan fleet, about 550 B.C. In Sicily, very uneasy relations prevailed between the Carthaginian and Greek settlements; but it was not until a later period that the quarrel broke out with any intensity. It is curious to find that, in or near 508 B.C., Carthage concluded a treaty of friendship with the city of Rome, from which, in a later age, when it had developed into the most powerful Republic in the world, the great commonwealth of Northern Africa was to receive its death-blow.

In the early part of the fifth century B.C., the people to be dreaded were not the Romans, but the Greeks; and, in particular, it was necessary to the Carthaginian designs to acquire a paramount influence over Sicily, the western extremity of which was not far distant from the African peninsula. The Carthaginians had, indeed, been settled for some time in that western corner, and had successfully repelled all attempts to drive them out; but they wished to secure entire command of an island admirably situated for the purposes of Mediterranean commerce. With this view they awaited a fitting opportunity for action, and such appeared to be presented by the invasion of the Hellenic mainland by Xerxes—an event which it was certain would prevent the Greeks of the continent, even if otherwise so minded, from sending any assistance to their Sicilian brethren. It must be admitted, however, that the Greeks themselves had given some provocation. In the year 485 B.C., Gelo, tyrant of Gela (then the most powerful of the Sicilian cities), obtained possession of Syracuse, assumed despotic power there, and resigned Gela to his brother Hiero. Having thus established a predominant power over all the Sicilian colonies of Greek origin, and being now the master of resources which were no doubt very considerable, he attempted to expel the Carthaginians and their aboriginal allies from the further extremity of the island. A prolonged struggle ensued, but Gelo was unable to effect his purpose, and, when Xerxes led his multitudes into Greece, it seemed to the Carthaginians that the very moment had arrived when they could subdue the whole of the Hellenic colonies along the eastern and southern coasts.

Gelo had been invited by the people of Athens and Sparta to contribute towards the general defence of Hellas against the enormous inroad of the Persians; but this he found himself unable to do, because of the dangers by which he was more immediately threatened. It is not unlikely that the Carthaginians were prompted by Xerxes to attack the Sicilians at the same time that he himself was marching against the people of the Grecian continent. Such a diversion would be a very powerful aid to his design, and, as the Phœnicians were at that time vassals to the Persian monarch, it is conceivable that the negotiations were carried on through them. However this may have been, a great fleet sailed from Carthage for Sicily about the same time that Xerxes began his march from Sardis. The commander of this armament was Hamilcar, a man of Syracusan origin on his mother's side, though a true Carthaginian on his father's; and the avowed purpose of his expedition was to restore Terillus, the exiled tyrant of Himera, one of the Greek cities of Sicily. Terillus had been dispossessed of his government by Theron, despot of Agrigentum; but he had the support of some other Sicilian cities, which inclined to the Carthaginian interest. With the countenance and support of the confederacy, Terillus applied to the Carthaginians for assistance; and this formed the pretext of that enterprise for which the expedition of Xerxes afforded the opportunity.

The fleet in which Hamilcar sailed was of extraordinary proportions, amounting to no fewer than 3,000 ships of war, together with transports. The army, when it landed on the Sicilian coast, consisted of 300,000 infantry, to which was originally added a due proportion of cavalry and war-chariots. It happened, however, that the ships which carried these contingents were dispersed by a storm, so that the Carthaginians were prevented by an accident from exerting their full strength. The force was of that mixed nationality which, as we have stated, distinguished the armies of the Carthaginian Republic. Asia, Africa, and Europe contributed to swell its ranks, and it would seem that the Phœnicians themselves supplied an addition to the phalanxes of their African descendants. The point of disembarkation was at Panormus, now Palermo—a city which had been formerly a Phœnician settlement, but which came under the power of Carthage on the decline of Tyre. Panormus was

situated towards the western extremity of the northern coast, and the march to Himera, also situated on the same coast, in a south-easterly direction from Panormus, was neither long nor difficult. Himera was closely invested, and, in order to raise the siege, Gelo dispatched thither his whole army, consisting of 50,000 foot and 5,000 horse. This was a very small array in comparison with the numerous battalions of Hamilcar; but Gelo was favoured by an accident, which enabled him to disconcert his enemies.

The Syracusan army was operating in the open field before the city of Himera, and Gelo was thus enabled to intercept a letter from Selinus (a Greek city on the south-western shores of Sicily), promising to send a body of cavalry to the aid of Hamilcar. He immediately detached a portion of his own mounted troops, with instructions that they should personate the reinforcement. These soldiers, being received into the Carthaginian camp, found means to spread a panic which the incongruous mixture of nationalities did much to foster. Seeing the disorder at its height, Gelo suddenly bore down upon his opponents, and attacked them with great vehemence and spirit. The battle lasted from sunrise until the approach of evening; but in the end the Carthaginians were totally defeated, and, according to Greek reports, left 150,000 men upon the field. That Hamilcar himself perished on this occasion appears certain; but the manner of his death is doubtful. He disappeared somewhat mysteriously, and Gelo was unable to discover his body, though he searched for it. The Carthaginians asserted, as Herodotus relates, that, when he saw the day to be lost, Hamilcar threw himself into the flames of a sacrifice consisting of the bodies of numerous victims; but Polyænus states that Gelo destroyed him by a stratagem, while he was in the act of offering a sacrifice. He would seem, nevertheless, to have fought with courage and ability; for, enemy though he was, the Greeks erected a monument to him on the ground where he had struggled to enslave them. Such of the Carthaginians as were not slain fled into the neighbouring mountains, and were ultimately captured by the Agrigentines, who employed them in the execution of public works. The hostile vessels had been drawn up on the beach, and protected with a rampart; but, after the defeat of the land-force, the ships were set on fire by the Greeks, and it is alleged—though the statement is probably in excess of the truth—that only twenty escaped. This great victory is said to have been fought on the very day whereon the Persians were vanquished at Salamis. At any rate, it must have been about the same time; and when information of the fact arrived in Hellas Proper, it vastly increased the spirit of the Greeks in encountering the perils which yet lay before them.

A reasonable scepticism will suggest considerable doubt as to whether the defeat of the Carthaginians was so entirely crushing as Greek authorities aver. Yet it was unquestionably a complete discomfiture, so far as existing designs upon Sicily were concerned. The Senate of Carthage perceived the necessity of peace, and at once made proposals to Gelo. These he accepted, on condition that Carthage should pay 2,000 talents, should send to Syracuse two ships fully equipped, and should thenceforward abolish the practice of sacrificing human victims to Moloch. The last of these conditions is very interesting, as showing a regard for humanity not usual in the ancient world, and as proving the immense superiority of Grecian paganism over the dark idolatries of Asiatic and African nations. The Sicilian Greeks were wise in abstaining from reprisals. Their power was sufficiently great to defend their own land and their own cities, but it would doubtless have been worsted in a direct attack upon the gigantic bulk of Carthaginian force and wealth. Indeed, all that the Greeks of Sicily required was to be left alone in their insular territory, so to work out, under favourable conditions, the tasks which they had taken in hand. A period of great prosperity ensued upon the defeat of Hamilcar. Hiero, the brother of Gelo, succeeded to the government of Syracuse, on the death of that ruler in 478 B.C., two years after the battle of Himera. The reign of Hiero was characterised by much splendour, and he was fortunate in naval battles against the Tyrrhenians and Carthaginians, besides distinguishing himself as a victor in the Olympic Games. This monarch was the friend and patron of Æschylus, Simonides, and Pindar; but his nature was deeply tainted by the vices of his age and of his position, and when, after a reign of eleven years, he died in 467 B.C., he left to his brother Thrasybulus a legacy of popular discontent, which the oppressions of the new despot speedily ripened into rebellion. With the expulsion of Thrasybulus, the dynasty of Gelo was overthrown in 465 B.C. In this rebellion, Syracuse was aided by the other Greek communities of Sicily, and the result was the re-establishment of popular government in all the Hellenic cities of that island.

The twin victories of Salamis and of Himera inspired the Greeks with a feeling of hopefulness, and with gratitude to those deities who, to the eye of their religious faith, had aided in such grand

achievements. A trophy was erected by the Athenians on the island of Salamis, to celebrate the naval victory which had been obtained in the adjacent waters, and the chorus of youths around the pile was led by Sophocles, then a boy of sixteen, who had been selected for the office, not merely for his skill as a performer on the lyre and a graceful dancer, but for the extraordinary beauty of his person. The great triumph of Salamis was shortly afterwards represented on the stage by Æschylus, and the whole of Greece, though her fate yet hung in the balance, gave herself up to rejoicings which must not be considered as vainglorious, but as the free expression of impulsive natures, actuated by the loftiest sentiments of which men in their aggregate capacity are capable. The greater number of the thanksgiving offerings were sent to Delphi, and there converted into a colossal statue; the rest were divided among the allies; and the commanders then met in the temple of Poseidon, or Neptune, on the Isthmus of Corinth, to determine which of the States should receive the highest award of merit. The foremost position was assigned to Ægina by unanimous consent. The Æginetan Polycritus, and the Athenians Eumenes and Aminias, were honoured with the first place for personal valour; votes were then taken for the first and second prizes for skill and wisdom. On the votes being collected, it was found that, while all had awarded the second prize to Themistocles, each had claimed the first prize for himself. Themistocles may well have considered that he was sufficiently distinguished by this remarkable agreement of opinion; but, the votes being as they were, it was impossible to assign any prize at all. The great Athenian shortly afterwards went to Sparta, where, in addition to a crown of olive, he received a splendid chariot, and, on his return, was escorted as far as the borders of Tegea by a band of three hundred youthful warriors. Themistocles himself dedicated a temple to Artemis, as the goddess of good counsel; but it is to be feared that his unparalleled honours tended still further to corrupt a nature which had from the first exhibited an evil bias.

The defeat of the Persians at Salamis encouraged some of the Greek cities of Chalcidice to throw off the yoke which had been imposed on them. Potidæa, situated on the narrow territory of Pallene, the most western of the three small peninsulas which there strike out into the Ægean, was the first to take advantage of the altered position of affairs. Chalcidice must be considered a portion of Macedonia; but it had received several Greek colonies, and was for the most part Hellenic in its sympathies, although at first inclined, from motives of prudence, to temporise with the enemy. The city of Potidæa was founded by the Corinthians, and its Greek origin was now shown in the readiness of its citizens to advance the national cause. Olynthus having followed the same course, Artabazus, the Persian commander who had escorted Xerxes to the Hellespont on his return to Asia, determined to chastise the citizens before rejoining Mardonius in his renewed operations against the main body of the Greeks. At that time, Olynthus was inhabited by the Bottiæans, a people who are supposed to have been partly of Cretan origin. Having been gradually driven by the encroachments of the Macedonians into the position they then occupied, their willingness to make common cause with the Greeks against the Persians, to whom Macedonia was tributary, was doubtless all the stronger. This fact may have given additional intensity to the wrath of Artabazus; at any rate, he massacred the whole population in cold blood, after obtaining possession of the city. He then re-peopled Olynthus with Greek colonists from other parts of Chalcidice, on whose fidelity he thought he could rely. Potidæa offered a more vigorous resistance, and Artabazus endeavoured, but in vain, to take the city by bribing some of its inhabitants. At length, after the Persian forces had lain three months before the place, an opportunity of success seemed to be presented by Nature herself. The sea ebbed to an extraordinary degree, leaving the shore bare under the walls of the city. Artabazus sent a division of his army round the town, and, while his men were occupying the ground from which the sea had thus strangely retired, the waters returned with a higher tide than had been ever known before. Many were drowned, others were slain by the garrison; and Artabazus, raising the siege, conducted his forces into Thessaly. Such, at least, is the story that was credited by Greeks. Its truth may be open to some doubt; but that Artabazus laid siege to Potidæa, and that he was compelled to retire without taking the city, are unquestionably historical facts.

Thus, in that memorable year 480 B.C., the double irruption of foreign elements into the Hellenic world was successfully encountered and repelled. At Salamis, at Himera, and at Potidæa, the attempts of Persians and Carthaginians to subject men of Greek race had been attended by remarkable ill-success. Athens had fallen before the arms of Xerxes; but the Athenians themselves were yet free and triumphant. The great sea-fight, in which Athenians, Æginetans, and other

Hellenes, alike distinguished themselves, had ruined the hopes of Xerxes, and caused the retreat of that monarch in shame and confusion. At Himera, the naval power of the Carthaginians was temporarily shattered; and in the remote Chalcidian peninsula, the descendants of Corinthians had foiled the armies of Artabazus before the walls of Potidæa. In every direction, the fortunes of Greece were in the ascendant; but the Asiatic enemy was yet entrenched upon the soil of Hellas, and it was not until after a prolonged and bloody struggle that he was finally hurled back towards the quarter of the globe from which his multitudinous legions had poured forth.

CHAPTER XXXII.

FAILURE OF THE PERSIANS, AND RISE OF THE ATHENIAN SUPREMACY.

Preparations for the Renewed Attack on Greece—Negotiations between Athens and Sparta—Suspicious Conduct of the Latter—Re-occupation of Athens by Mardonius—Despatch of Lacedæmonian and other Reinforcements—Mardonius withdraws into Bœotia—March of the Grecian Army—Position of the Antagonists on the Asopus—Movement of the Greeks towards the Vicinity of Platæa—Battle of Platæa—Death of Mardonius, and Defeat of the Persians—Retreat of Artabazus into Asia—Action of the Athenian and other Greek Divisions—Storming of the Fortified Camp on the Asopus—Splendid Appointments of the Persians—Division of the Spoils—Losses of the Greeks and Persians—The Story of Aristodemus—Punishment of Thebes—Measures for the Common Defence—Battle of Mycale—Destruction of the Persian Fleet—Deliverance of the Grecian Isles, the Thracian Chersonese, Cyprus, and Byzantium—Haughty Conduct of Pausanias—His Intrigues with Xerxes—The Confederacy of Delos—Commencement of the Athenian Supremacy—Rebuilding and Fortification of Athens—Formation of a great Naval Harbour—Reform of the Athenian Constitution—Renewed Intrigues of Pausanias—His Detection and Death—Flight of Themistocles to Persia—Death of that Statesman in the City of Magnesia.

MARDONIUS, in undertaking the reduction of Greece which Xerxes himself had been unable to accomplish, had required and received permission to select his own troops. He asked for an army of 300,000 of the best soldiers that Persia possessed, and he was allowed to choose the whole of the Immortals, a division of the king's horse-guard, and other picked battalions. Having accompanied Xerxes as far as Thessaly, he there passed the winter, awaiting the return of Artabazus with the 60,000 men whose duty it was to escort the monarch to the Hellespont. This contingent was a portion of the army which Mardonius had culled from the rest of the invading hosts, and without its co-operation he would have hesitated to attack such determined warriors as the Greeks had proved themselves to be. Spring, likewise, was a more favourable time for military and naval operations, and to the spring all looked forward with anxiety and expectation. The prospects of the invaders were certainly very far from bad. The force under the command of Mardonius was much more manageable, and therefore more likely to be effective, than that which Xerxes had led with such pomp across the narrow straits. Disunion yet reigned among the Greeks. The Phocians, it is true, showed symptoms of a desire to follow the cities of Chalcidice in upholding the national cause; but Macedonia, Thessaly, and Bœotia, were all well affected towards the Persians, and Ionia made its willingness to rebel contingent on its receiving from the Hellenic fleet a support which was not forthcoming. It even seemed to Mardonius that he might bring the Athenians themselves over to his side. He flattered the religious feelings of the Greeks by consulting some of their oracles, and afterwards produced responses which foretold that the Athenians, in combination with the Persians, should expel the Dorians from the Peloponnesus. Alexander, King of Macedon, was at the same time despatched into Attica, with direct offers on the part of the Persians; but they were indignantly refused, and preparations were conducted for the defence of Southern Greece.

While Mardonius was endeavouring to corrupt the Athenians, in the early part of 479 B.C., the people of Sparta, fearful that his offers might be accepted, sent envoys to their fellow-countrymen of Attica, begging them not to yield to such seductions, and offering to support their families as long as the war should last. The reply of Athens is believed to have been framed by Aristides, and was worthy of that noble character, and of the people whose resolves it expressed. The Athenians stated that no earthly consideration should induce them to make common cause with the enemy. They declined the offer of monetary assistance, but requested that the Spartans would

at once put their forces in motion to meet Mardonius in the north. The Spartan envoys promised that an army should be sent forward without delay; but the undertaking was not promptly fulfilled, and the energies of the Lacedæmonians were for the present employed in building fortifications across the Isthmus of Corinth, for the better protection of the Peloponnesus. The excuse for this slowness in providing the promised troops was similar to what had been advanced for the same dilatoriness previous to the battle of Marathon. It was alleged by the Spartans that they were engaged in the observance of certain religious ceremonies, and that they could not move troops until these were finished. They appear also to have been dismayed by an eclipse of the sun which occurred when the enemy was about to set out, and which was regarded as a disastrous omen. The contingent was ultimately sent, but not before the envoys of Athens had protested and threatened. It is impossible to deny that the conduct of the Spartans was such as to lay them open to a just suspicion; yet it may not have been really treacherous. An exaggerated sense of religious obligations may account for one portion of their delay; the death of their commander, shortly after the eclipse, may explain the rest.

Together with his Grecian allies, Mardonius marched against Athens immediately after the rejection of his offers by the people, and the city was again occupied in May or June, 479 B.C. The inhabitants once more removed to Salamis, and the Persian commander renewed his proposals for an alliance, but without effect. It was then that the Athenians sent their envoys to Sparta, charged with the expression of an indignant remonstrance; it was then that the Spartans—perhaps quickened in their movements by a fear lest the Athenians, in their exasperation, should unite their fleet with the Persian army for a joint attack on the Peloponnesus—despatched a body of 5,000 citizens, each attended by seven Helots. Soon afterwards, these detachments were followed by 5,000 Lacedæmonian Perioeci, accompanied by an equal number of light-armed Helots. This made a total of 50,000 men—the largest force which Sparta had ever sent into the field. The other Peloponnesian cities now contributed to the defence of Attica, so that a very formidable army was soon on its way to the seat of war, under the command of Pausanias, who acted as joint King of Sparta during the infancy of the son of Leonidas. On hearing of the approach of this force, Mardonius withdrew into Bœotia, where his cavalry (which were numerous) could operate with better advantage than in the country about Athens. He then took up a position on the left, or northern, bank of the Asopus. His camp, which was ten furlongs square, was fortified with barricades and towers, and the situation possessed many elements of strength. But some of the Grecian allies of Mardonius were beginning to show symptoms of untrustworthiness, and even the Persians themselves felt doubtful of success.

The forces of the Greek patriots continued to swell from day to day, and at length numbered as many as 110,000, including the Helots, and others who must be counted amongst the less effective troops. These were concentrated at Eleusis, a city of Attica, near the eastern extremity of Megara, where sacrifices were offered to the gods before setting out. The army then marched across the ridge of Cithæron, lying to the north-west of Attica, and halted within sight of the Persian hosts. The position they first assumed was on the further slopes of the mountain, near a place called Erythræ, south of the Asopus; but they were here a good deal annoyed by the javelins and arrows of the Persians, and by the attacks of their horsemen, who were stationed in the plains south of the river. After awhile, Pausanias moved in a north-westerly direction, and drew up his army on the banks of some small streams flowing into the Asopus, opposite to the place where the Persians had pitched their camp. The Lacedæmonians formed the right wing, which was the post of honour, while the Athenians occupied the left, the next position of importance. Each of the opposing armies appeared to dread the other, and, disliking the omens which the soothsayers interpreted, delayed to open the attack. Eight days passed without any serious collision; but the Persians cut off the supplies of the Greeks, and prevented their obtaining water. The situation of the latter was critical, for Persian gold was busy in the ranks of the Athenians, and a conspiracy was commenced for establishing an oligarchical government at Athens, under the direction of the Great King. The plot was defeated by the vigilance of Aristides; but it revealed the presence of a danger which it was impossible altogether to remove.

At length, Mardonius determined on a general action; but, the night before it was to commence, Alexander, King of Macedon, rode secretly over to the Grecian lines, and gave information of what was intended, saying that, as he too was a Greek by descent, he could not see Hellas enslaved by the Persians. Still, nothing followed but a good deal of manœuvring, and the Greeks, finding the position no longer tenable, owing to the Persian

cavalry seizing a fountain from which alone they could obtain water, determined to retreat by night to a piece of ground lying westward between two branches of the river Oëroë, and rather laxly called "the Island." This would bring them very near Platæa; indeed, the Greek centre, consisting of Megarians and Corinthians, actually entered the city, though such was no part of the original design. These divisions marched first; and while the Spartans and Athenians were ascending the hills which separated them from the Island, the fore menacing in the extreme; but Pausanias was too much of a Lacedæmonian to neglect the offices of religion even at so perilous a juncture. Having commanded his men to stoop down beneath the protection of their shields, and in that position to remain motionless, he consulted his gods by sacrifices, and, finding the replies unfavourable, refrained from authorising an attack. At length, he invoked the goddess Hera (Juno), and received an encouraging response.

The order to charge rang out immediately after,

THE SPARTANS AT PLATÆA.

beams of the rising sun struck on their spears and armour, and disclosed to the Persians the movement that was being carried out. Mardonius now believed that his opportunity had arrived. The order to attack was given, and the Persians dashed after the retreating enemy, like dogs from the leash. With a wild shout of anticipated victory, they plunged through the Asopus, and speedily gained upon the Spartans, with whom were some Tegeans. Pausanias lost no time in changing front, so as to face his opponent; but he had scarcely effected this new disposition when the Persian cavalry galloped up in formidable array. The Greeks had no mounted troops, and even their infantry was weaker than that of the Asiatics. The prospects of the day were there- and the Greeks, springing to their feet, bore down on the Persian infantry with extraordinary force and impetus. Up to that moment, the foot-soldiers of Mardonius had been posted behind their large wicker shields, which, according to custom, they planted in the ground so as to form a kind of breastwork, and from the shelter of which they galled their antagonists with showers of darts. This defence, however, could not endure a moment before the fury of the Lacedæmonian onset. The shields went down like reeds; the light-armed Persians, whose bodies were but poorly covered, proved no match for the mailed warriors of Sparta, who, with their long spears, were able to do great execution among the ranks of the enemy, while preventing them from coming to

close quarters; and, after a prolonged combat, the latter became disorganized and dispirited. They had fought, however, with distinguished valour, and, as long as any chance of success remained, had made the utmost efforts to close with their antagonists, when their javelins and daggers might have proved effective. Wildly flinging themselves upon the spears of the Lacedæmonians, they grasped them by the shafts, and endeavoured to break them with their hands. But the steady phalanx of the Greeks was not to be shattered by any such feats of heroism, and the Persians continuously lost ground before the resistless pressure of their foes. Mardonius did his best to retrieve the fortunes of the day. Arrayed in shining panoply, and mounted on a white charger at the head of a body-guard of one thousand picked men, he rode about the field, seeking to encourage his troops; and it was not until his death, accompanied or followed by the destruction of nearly all his personal attendants, that the Asiatics gave up the contest in despair, and rushed in a disorderly crowd to their fortified camp beyond the Asopus.

Artabazus, the second in command, had doubted the prudence of the attack to which Mardonius had been tempted by the retrograde movement of the Greeks, and the separation which had thus been caused among the different divisions of their forces. A body of 40,000 Persians had been formed as a reserve when Mardonius commenced his pursuit of the Spartans, and Artabazus was leading these men to the scene of action, to reinforce the others, when it became evident from the rush of fugitives that the main army had been routed. Matters thus assumed so serious an aspect that the new commander saw at once the necessity of abandoning his camp, and retreating northwards. It might have been anticipated that he would make a stand at Thebes, which was well fortified, and favourably affected towards the Persians; but he appears to have considered the cause hopeless from the first. Dreading further reverses, he made his way towards the Hellespont, and did not pause until he found himself again in Asia. Some of the Greeks set out in pursuit of his retiring forces, but lost all traces of them in Thessaly. It is said, however, that Alexander of Macedon, who until then had acted as the ally of Persia, fell upon the rear of the invaders, and did them some damage in their disorderly flight towards the straits. They suffered much, also, from the attacks of Thracian tribes, and several of the men died from hunger.

The battle of Platæa was gained chiefly by the Lacedæmonians and Tegeans; but the Athenians also had been hotly engaged, and had gathered their share of honour. The ill-conduct of the retreat towards Platæa left a considerable gap between the forces of Athens and those of Sparta, so that the former were totally unable to give any assistance to the latter, especially as they found themselves confronted by a body of Thebans and other Bœotians, the allies of Persia. A fierce contest, inflamed by mutual detestation and the memory of old quarrels, resulted from this encounter; but at length the Bœotians were driven back, and none of the other Greek supporters of Xerxes ventured into the field. The Megarians and Corinthians, who, as already stated, had overshot their mark, and taken up a position in and about Platæa, in rear of the Spartans and their comrades, did not come into action at all. Indeed, the combat lasted so short a time that these contingents of the patriotic army, though at less than half an hour's distance from the field of battle, arrived in time only to join in the pursuit. Reinforcements had been sent from Elis and Mantinea; but they did not appear until after the battle had been fought, owing to some tardiness on the part of the commanding officer. Only a portion of both the contending armies had been engaged in the conflict; and, whatever may be said of the fighting qualities displayed on this occasion both by Greeks and Persians, it can hardly be averred that either exhibited much generalship. The battle was in fact a wild and tumultuous fray, in which the greater solidity and steadiness of the Greeks, together with the superiority of their arms and armour, prevailed over the invaders.

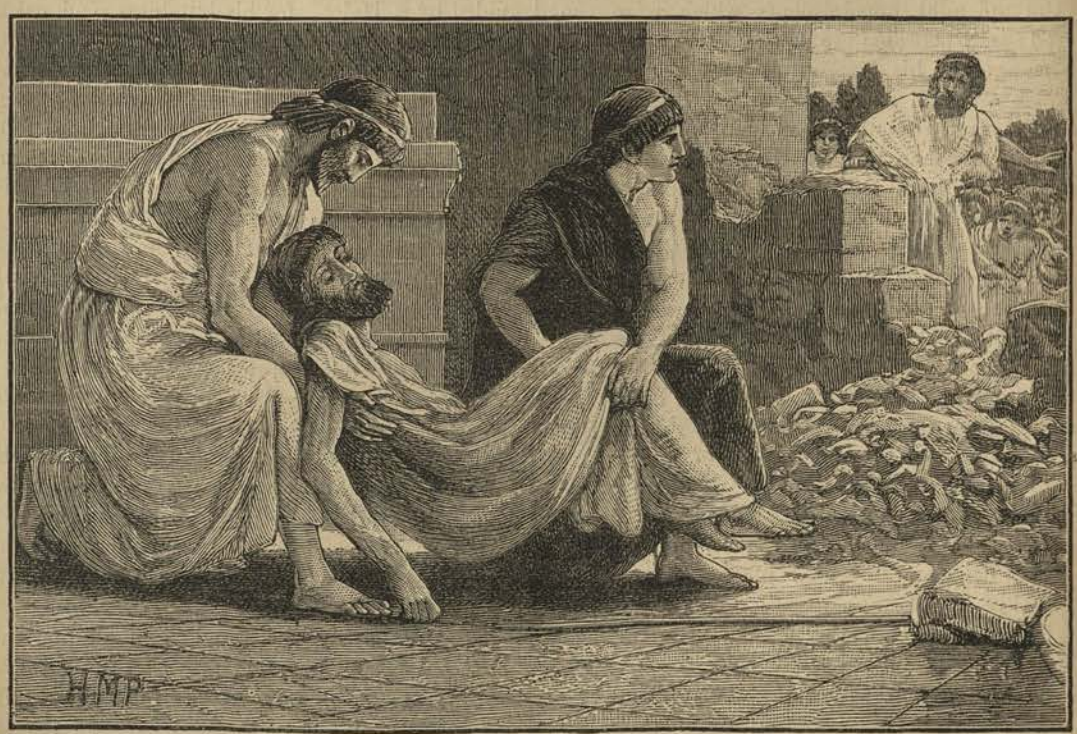
In hastily retreating to Asia, Artabazus left the main body of the Persian army in the fortified camp on the Asopus. It was necessary, before Greece could consider herself entirely delivered from the oppressor, that this post should be taken, and its defenders destroyed. The Lacedæmonians, reinforced by the Corinthians and Megarians from Platæa, made an attempt to scale the ramparts, but were driven back by the garrison. The Athenians afterwards arrived upon the spot, and, mounting the wall, opened a breach in the wooden defences, through which the others poured in. What ensued must be described rather as a massacre than as a combat. The miserable Persians, having lost all heart, submitted without further struggle; but the Greeks, unable to restrain their rage, slaughtered their opponents, until, as Herodotus alleges, only three thousand

were left out of a total of 300,000. Some exaggeration, it is to be hoped, may be imputed to this statement; but that the slaughter was very great is not open to question. The appearance of the camp, as described by Grecian authors, presented a remarkable picture of the barbaric luxury which always distinguished the Persians. The tents of the officers were magnificently furnished, and vessels of gold and silver lay about as if for ordinary use. This, however, was in part to be attributed to the fact that Xerxes, when abandoning Greece, had left behind him all the splendid appointments which were considered indispensable to an Eastern monarch. The manger of his horses was curiously wrought in brass, and fell as a prize to the Tegeans, who were the first to enter the camp. The armour of the great men was of the richest and most costly description; collars and bracelets of gold were found in astonishing profusion; and it is recorded that many of these treasures were embezzled by Greek serfs, and afterwards sold to families in Ægina, for amounts ridiculously below their real value. A portion of the spoil was set apart for the Delphic Apollo, and was formed into a golden tripod, supported by a three-headed brazen serpent. Out of another portion was fashioned a colossal statue of Jupiter for the temple at Olympia, and on the base of this stupendous work were inscribed the names of those cities which had shared in the national glory of Platæa. A third portion went to the creation of a gigantic figure of Poseidon, on the Isthmus of Corinth. A large reward was assigned to Pausanias as the chief of the Lacedæmonians, and the rest of the booty was divided among the other Greek contingents, in proportion to their numbers. The prizes consisted for the most part of coin, gold and silver plate, jewellery, magnificent garments, ornamented arms, carpets, hangings, horses, and camels.

The losses of the Greeks in this famous encounter were very small, in comparison with those which had been inflicted on the Persians. Among the slain on the side of the invaders was found the body of Mardonius. It was treated with great respect by Pausanias, who nobly rejected the advice of an Æginetan that the mutilation of the body of Leonidas should be avenged by impaling that of the Persian commander. On the following day, the remains of Mardonius were secretly carried off, and honourably interred; and in later times a monument was shown among the neighbouring mountains, which, in the popular belief, covered the bones of this unfortunate general. Three barrows were raised over the fallen Greeks: one, it would appear, for the officers; the second for the ordinary soldiers; and the third for the Helots and other serfs. Among the Spartan slain was a man named Aristodemus, whose story is of an affecting nature. This man, in company with another, named Eurytus, was detained at the village of Alpeni by a severe disorder of the eyes during the first part of the contest at Thermopylæ. When it became known that Leonidas had determined to die at his post, together with all his Spartans, Eurytus donned his armour, and, guided by a Helot—for his blindness rendered this help necessary—joined the ranks of his countrymen, and perished in the final encounter. Owing, perhaps, to his sickness and deprivation of sight, Aristodemus had not resolution enough to follow this example, and afterwards returned to Sparta, where he was regarded with scorn and indignation, as a disgrace to the Lacedæmonian character. In the ensuing year, he was with the rest at Platæa, where, advancing in front of the ranks, he distinguished himself by a reckless bravery, which showed that he courted the death he ultimately found. An end so courageous might, in the estimation of a more impulsive people, have cancelled the disgrace of a previous day—a day, moreover, of physical weakness and mental depression. But the feeling of the Spartans in these matters was inflexible, and the memory of Aristodemus received no honours for the feats of desperate and irregular valour with which he had terminated his life.

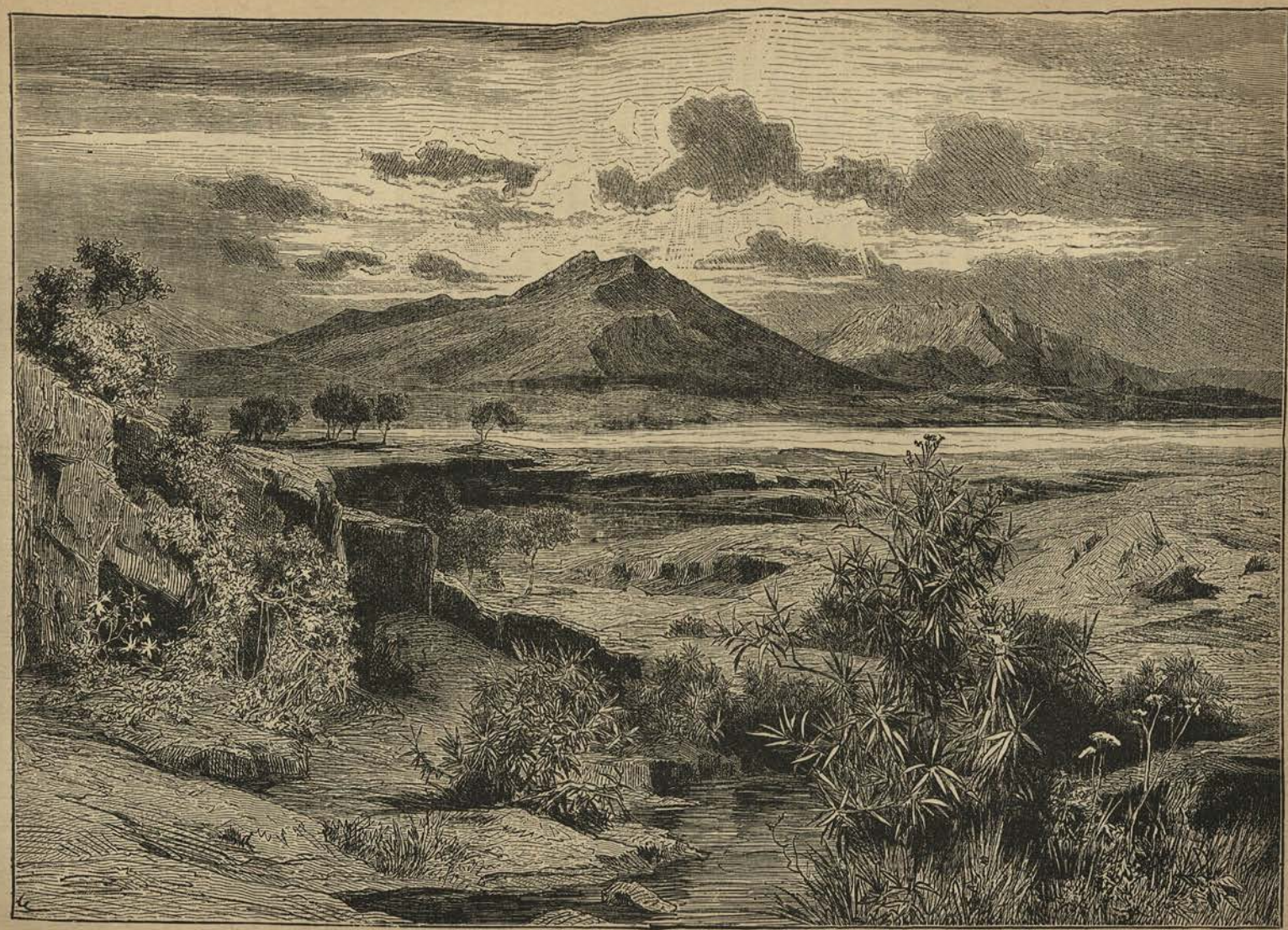
Greece was now delivered from the presence of the Asiatics; but the native allies of the invaders had yet to be punished. Eleven days after the battle of Platæa, Pausanias invested the city of Thebes, the principal offender, and demanded that the chief of those who had given their support to Persia should be delivered into his hands. The Thebans refused to comply, and Pausanias at once laid siege to the town, and wasted the surrounding country. When these operations had lasted twenty days, the Medizing leaders, as those who had favoured the Persians were called, voluntarily surrendered themselves, hoping, perhaps, that they might save their lives by bribes. Pausanias, however, put all to death, without any form of trial, excepting one who managed to escape. The city of Platæa, on account of its neighbourhood to the great battle, was invested with a sacred character, and its inhabitants were charged with the duty of protecting the tombs of those who had fallen on the glorious day, of offering periodical sacrifices, and of celebrating the occasion every

fifth year in a great public festival, to be called the Eleutheria, or Feast of Liberty. The city was released from its political dependence on Thebes, and the inviolability of its territory was guaranteed by the allies, on condition that the people perpetually observed the solemnities with which they had been entrusted. On the motion of Aristides, a permanent league, for the common defence of Greece against Persia, was ratified by another oath; an annual meeting of deputies was appointed to be held at Platæa; and it was determined to establish a military and naval force for the protection of Hellas against any renewed attack. The magnitude of the danger which had been just escaped, and which was largely promoted by Greek jealousy and disunion, suggested the necessity of a combination which was not less prudent than patriotic.



DEATH OF PAUSANIAS.

The victory of Platæa had been gained on the 4th (or, according to some accounts, the 22nd) of September, 479 B.C. By a remarkable coincidence, the same day was rendered doubly illustrious by another great success, in which the Grecian fleet bore a subordinate part. Having crossed the Ægean, the Spartan king, Leotychides, who was acting as admiral, discovered the Persian vessels at Mycale, on the coast of Asia Minor, between Samos and Miletus. The strength of the Persian squadrons had been very much reduced by the loss of the Phœnician contingent, and the Persian captains entertained so great a fear of the Greeks, in consequence of the reverse at Salamis, that they hauled their ships on to the beach, and surrounded them with a rampart. The crews then joined the army of Tigranes, which, to the number of 60,000, was posted along the shore. Leotychides, who had shown considerable hesitation as to crossing the Ægean, was much reassured by this state of affairs, and, as he sailed by the coast, ordered a loud-voiced herald to invite the Ionians to revolt. The Persians considered this incentive to be of so dangerous a nature that they disarmed all the Samians in their forces, and sent the Milesians to guard the mountain roads in the rear. The Greeks then disembarked, and made ready for attacking their adversaries. It is said that at this moment some mysterious, and indeed supernatural, intimation of the Greek success at Platæa, and of the flight of the Persians spread like fire through the ranks that Leotychides commanded. Afterwards it was believed that the message of previous victory was flashed into the minds of those who were about to fight by the direct action of the



BATTLE-FIELD OF PLATÆA.

goddess Demeter (Ceres), who had a temple near both spots; but, however the facts may have been, a sudden impulse of battle, an inexplicable sentiment of confidence, took possession of the Greeks, and they rushed at once into the combat. The struggle was obstinate and prolonged, but in the end the Persians were so thoroughly defeated as to be unable to obtain, even behind their fortifications, the protection which they sought. In this action, the chief honours were reaped by the Athenians, who, however, were valorously supported by the Spartans, Corinthians, Sicyonians, and Trœzenians. The Persian fleet was set on fire; the Ionians turned against their former masters; and the shattered remnants of the Persian army fell back on Sardis, where Xerxes was still abiding. The two land commanders on the side of the Persians fell bravely in the struggle; the two naval commanders consulted their safety in flight. It was now evident that the offensive power of Xerxes was completely broken. The islands of the Ægean became independent, and the Greek colonies of Asia Minor appeared disposed to throw off all allegiance to the Great King at the first opportunity for successful rebellion. The Thracian Chersonese was recovered by the Athenians, whose possession it had formerly been; and the allied forces then dispersed to their several States. With the taking of Sestos, in the Chersonese, which occurred in 478 B.C., the History of Herodotus comes to a close.

Grave as had been the defeats sustained by the forces of Xerxes, the Persians still held several important posts in Europe, together with the island of Cyprus. Byzantium, and some other places in Thrace, were yet in their possession, and the Greeks could not consider themselves secure until they had completely expelled the national enemy from the European side of the Ægean and the Propontis. They accordingly fitted out a fleet in 478 B.C., and placed it under the command of Pausanias, although the greater number of the ships were furnished by Athens. The first proceeding of this fleet was to deliver the Greek towns in Cyprus; the second was to besiege Byzantium, which, after a long period of resistance, surrendered to the Hellenic allies. It was then that the reputation of Pausanias acquired a stain which continued to deepen until his tragical end. The character of this commander appears to have been ruined by the flattery of which he was made the object after the battle of Platæa, and by the splendid and valuable presents which he received as his share of the Persian booty. On his return to Sparta, he had exhibited a very insubordinate spirit towards the Ephors, who, as previously related, were in fact, if not nominally, the highest powers in the State. Pride and egotism were from this time largely developed in his nature, and it is perhaps surprising that he should have been entrusted with the command of the fleet designed for the reduction of Byzantium and other places. For some time, however, his conduct was not seriously open to reproach; but after the capture of Byzantium he clandestinely opened communications with Xerxes.

His approaches towards the national enemy were accompanied by the return of certain members of the Persian royal family who had been taken in the chief city of Thrace, and by a letter to Xerxes, in which Pausanias said that, wishing to oblige the king, he had sent him back these prisoners of war; that he was disposed to marry the daughter of Xerxes, and to bring Sparta and the rest of Greece under his dominion; that he held himself able to accomplish this project; and that, if the design was agreeable to the Persian monarch, he might send some trustworthy agent to the coast, through whom they could carry on their future correspondence. Xerxes, who was naturally delighted with the proposal, appointed Artabazus to the satrapy of Dascylium, a city of Bithynia, where he could easily co-operate with Pausanias. The plot might perhaps have been carried out with some degree of success, had not the vanity of the Spartan betrayed its existence at an early stage. Not only did he offend the other Greeks by his haughtiness, but he openly assumed the dress and manners of a Persian, and in that capacity made a sort of royal progress in Thrace, attended by Oriental guards. It being now evident that he was a traitor, the Lacedæmonian authorities sent out another commander to supersede him; but the arrival of his successor was anticipated by the transfer of the command to the Athenians. This was done at the instance of the Ionians serving in the combined fleet; and the person to whom they principally addressed themselves, and who in consequence assumed the chief direction of the naval force, was the illustrious Aristides.

The Ionians, it will be recollected, were to some extent of Athenian origin, and they had always regarded Athens as their parent city, or metropolis. They saw that the naval power of Greece lay with Athens more than with any other State, and they considered that by a close alliance with the chief city of Attica they might in time recover their own independence, and be enabled to hold it even against Persia. Thus arose, in 478 B.C., what is called the

Confederacy of Delos—a title derived from the understanding that deputies of the allies forming the league should meet periodically in the temple of Apollo and Artemis on the Ægean island associated with the myth of Latona. Rhodes, Cos, Lesbos, and Tenedos, joined this confederacy, together with the Ionic islands of Samos and Chios, and some of the Greek cities of Thrace and Chalcidice. It was agreed that each State was to make a contribution, either in money or ships; and Delos was appointed as the treasury where the revenues of the league were to be deposited. These arrangements were conducted by Aristides with the integrity and good sense which distinguished all his actions; but shortly afterwards he was succeeded in the command of the combined fleet by Cimon, the son of Miltiades, who in 476 B.C. distinguished himself by the capture of Eion, on the river Strymon, and shortly afterwards of Scyros, an island on the western side of the Ægean. From the latter, Cimon expelled the native inhabitants, and settled the country with Athenians; for the island, though small and barren, was excellently adapted as a naval station. The Athenian power was becoming greater every year, and Sparta found herself deprived of the supremacy which until then she had exercised over the whole of Greece.

That Athens had attained this eminent position, was due to the genius of her people and the power of her navy. The fortunes of the recent war had been such as to reduce the city itself to little more than a heap of ruins; and even while they were thus aiming at supreme command, the population were obliged to devote much of their attention, and no small portion of their means, to the work of rebuilding. Those who had found a temporary home in Trœzen, Ægina, and Salamis, were brought back to Athens, where shelter was provided for them at the public expense. The bounds of the city were then enlarged, and fortifications were erected, such as might give efficient protection against attack. These bulwarks excited the jealousy of the Æginetans, whose naval power was now surpassed by that of Athens. They endeavoured to enlist the fears of the Spartans on the same side, and the rulers of the chief Peloponnesian State suggested to the Athenians that a strongly-fortified town, such as Athens seemed likely to become, would, in the event of its being once more occupied by the Persians, be turned into a camp and stronghold of the enemy. Themistocles, who was still one of the leading statesmen at Athens, advised his countrymen to dismiss the Spartan envoys with a promise that explanations should be given by a special embassy. Having afterwards procured his own appointment as one of the ambassadors, he contrived to delay the negotiations until the walls of the city were not far from completion. When sufficient progress had been made to render Athens safe from a possible assault by the Lacedæmonians and Æginetans, Themistocles avowed the intention of his countrymen, and declared that the object of the fortifications was to enable Athens to act with freedom and independence. It was now too late for armed opposition: the Spartans were obliged to acquiesce in what they could not alter. Meanwhile, the Athenian fleet was being augmented at the rate of twenty triremes a year; and for the accommodation and safety of this fleet a harbour was required, of considerable size, and of strength sufficient to defy all comers. The natural basins of the Piræus and Munychia were enclosed in a wall of unusual height and thickness. Great as it was, however, the height was only half what Themistocles contemplated; but this was found to answer all the purposes of protection.

While these ambitious designs were being prosecuted, internal politics received a due share of attention, and about 477 B.C. a modification of the Athenian constitution, the object of which was to increase the power of the democracy, was introduced by Aristides, who in earlier years had supported the aristocratical party. The popularity of that statesman increased with ripening age; that of Themistocles declined, in spite of his great services to the State, because it was well known that he was extortionate and corrupt. By his political enemies he was accused of secretly conducting negotiations with Persia, and it is certain that, notwithstanding the events of recent years, the great Asiatic Empire had many adherents in Greece. The chief of these was doubtless Pausanias. On returning to Sparta, that general had contrived to procure an acquittal on the charges brought against him; but he was held in general distrust, and it was not long before his actions showed the justice of the public impression. He re-entered Byzantium, and renewed his negotiations with Artabazus, until the Athenians expelled him from the city. He then passed into Asia Minor, doing his utmost to draw over various Grecian towns to the cause of Persia. After awhile, he was again ordered home, and, on once more returning, was for a short time imprisoned by the Ephors. Regaining his liberty, he endeavoured to effect a revolution in the State, and at the same time continued his correspondence with the national enemy. He appears to have relied on the inability of the authorities to procure any actual proof against him. This, however, was at length forthcoming, owing to an unforeseen circumstance. One of his

slaves, to whom he had entrusted a letter to Artabazus, was induced to break the seal, and read the contents. The document was at once submitted to the Ephors; but, as the testimony of a slave was regarded as insufficient against a free man, the authorities contrived to place themselves in a position where they could overhear a conversation between Pausanias and his servant. What passed was conclusive as to the traitor's guilt. It was determined to arrest Pausanias, who, having reason to fear such a step, fled into the temple of Athene Chalcicœcus (Minerva of the Brazen House). As it was unlawful to take him by force out of this sanctuary, the doors were built up, in order that he might be reduced by famine to the verge of death. His own mother is said to have deposited the first stone; and, when on the point of expiring, he was carried out of the temple, that the sacred edifice might not be polluted by his corpse. Although the punishment of Pausanias seems characterised by a stern justice, according to the principles of the age, a reaction in his favour set in some time after, and the Delphic Oracle ordered an atonement to be made to his memory, and to the goddess whose sanctuary had been in some degree violated. His services were remembered, rather than his crimes; and it was subsequently believed that the land had never been purged from the guilt of sacrilege involved in his end.

The death of Pausanias is thought to have occurred in 471 B.C., and his fate led very speedily to the fall of Themistocles. It appeared that the latter was involved in the treason of the former, and, on this fact being communicated by the Spartans to the Athenians, Themistocles was tried on the charge, but acquitted. Shortly afterwards, however, he was banished, and retired to Argos, a city known to be well affected towards Persia. The proofs against him at that time were not sufficiently strong to justify any severer punishment than ostracism; but, about five years later (466 B.C.), his guilt became so notorious that envoys were sent from Athens and Sparta to arrest him. He fled from Argos to Corcyra, from Corcyra to Epirus. In the neighbouring territory of the Molossians, he seated himself as a suppliant on the hearth of King Admetus, whom, from some former acts of his, he had reason to regard as an enemy. Admetus treated him with the utmost kindness and hospitality, refusing to deliver him up to his pursuers, and finally permitting him to depart on his road to Persia. Making his way over the mountains, he arrived at Pydna, on the Thermaic Gulf, where, under cover of an assumed name, he took passage on a merchant-vessel for Asia Minor. Stress of weather drove the ship towards Naxos, which was at that time blockaded by an Athenian fleet. As a last resource, Themistocles divulged his real personality to the master of the vessel, and persuaded him to avoid the island, though at the risk of shipwreck. In 465 B.C., the fugitive arrived at Ephesus, whence he was conducted to Susa.

Artaxerxes I. (Longimanus) had just ascended the throne of Persia, and Themistocles, having entered into communication with him, became thenceforward devoted to his interests. He received from the sovereign a Persian wife, and was loaded with riches and with splendid presents. At the city of Magnesia, near the Ionian coast, he was joined by his family, and died there in the sixty-fifth year of his age, probably of natural disease, though it was believed by some that he perished by his own hand. His life in the Persian Empire had been a life of luxury and splendour, exceeding the state of many princes; but it does not appear that, in return for all these favours, he made any approach towards realising those schemes for the subjugation of his own country with which he amused the credulity and the ambition of the Asiatic despot. The date of his decease is uncertain. He is said to have been born in 514 B.C.: if so, he must, counting by his years, have died in or about 449 B.C.; but it seems scarcely probable that he lived in luxurious indolence under the sceptre of Artaxerxes so long a period as sixteen years. In any case, however, his great rival, Aristides, departed before him. The death of that pure and lofty-natured man seems to have taken place in 467; and with the removal of these two remarkable characters, the affairs of Athens and of Greece entered on a different stage.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

ATHENS UNDER PERICLES.

Cimon and the Confederate Fleet—Investment of Naxos—Operations of Cimon in Asia Minor—Athenian Projects for the Creation of an Empire—Proceedings of Cimon in Asia Minor and in Thrace—Revolt of Helots in Sparta—Third Messenian War—Decline of the Spartan Power—Failure of Cimon in his Expedition against Ithome—Political Views of Pericles—Rivalry between Pericles and Cimon—Democratic Alterations in the Athenian Constitution—Ostracism of Cimon—Assassination of Ephialtes—Character of Pericles, and his Position in the Commonwealth—Alliance of Athens with Argos, Thessaly, and Megara—The "Long Walls" of Athens—Defeat of the Æginetans—The Spartans in Bœotia—Battle of Tanagra—Recall of Cimon from Banishment—Reduction of Ægina—Expedition of Tolmides to the Peloponnesus—Conclusion of the Third Messenian War—Greek Affairs in Egypt—Athenian Expedition to Cyprus—Death of Cimon—Naval Battle off the Cyprian Salamis—The Peace of Callias—History of Cyprus—Imperial Power of Athens—Reverses of the Athenians—Ambitious Designs of Pericles—Athenian Literature and Art in the Fifth Century, B.C.

EUROPE and Asia had met upon the fields of Hellas, and Asia had retired worsted from the combat. The battle of Platæa proved the ruin of the Persian hopes west of the Ægean, and the conflict of Mycale had shown that even in Ionia the forces of Xerxes could not maintain themselves against the free energies of Greece. Yet the Athenians at least could not afford to rest in security, nor to regard the Persian Empire with eyes of indifference or toleration. The great Asiatic despotism was still a danger to be dreaded—still a Power to be weakened. Years passed away, without materially diminishing the peril. Themistocles was in banishment—Aristides was dead; and it might have seemed to the Persians that the strength of Greece was sufficiently reduced to warrant another attack, had not repeated evidence been given that the national vigour was shared by numerous men. After the death of Aristides, Cimon, who had already distinguished himself as a naval commander, became the leader of the conservative party at Athens, and by his popular manners ingratiated himself with the humbler orders of the citizens, although the nature of his political principles would rather have had the contrary effect. His abilities were certainly great, and his conduct of the fleet established by the Confederacy of Delos justified the choice that had been made of him as its admiral. The existence of that league was threatened, twelve years after its creation, by a rupture of some importance. Naxos, the largest island of the Cyclades, revolted from the Confederacy in 466 B.C., and, being invested by the combined fleet, was reduced, after a prolonged blockade. The island was then made tributary to Athens, and the supremacy of that State over the rest of Greece became every year more manifest.

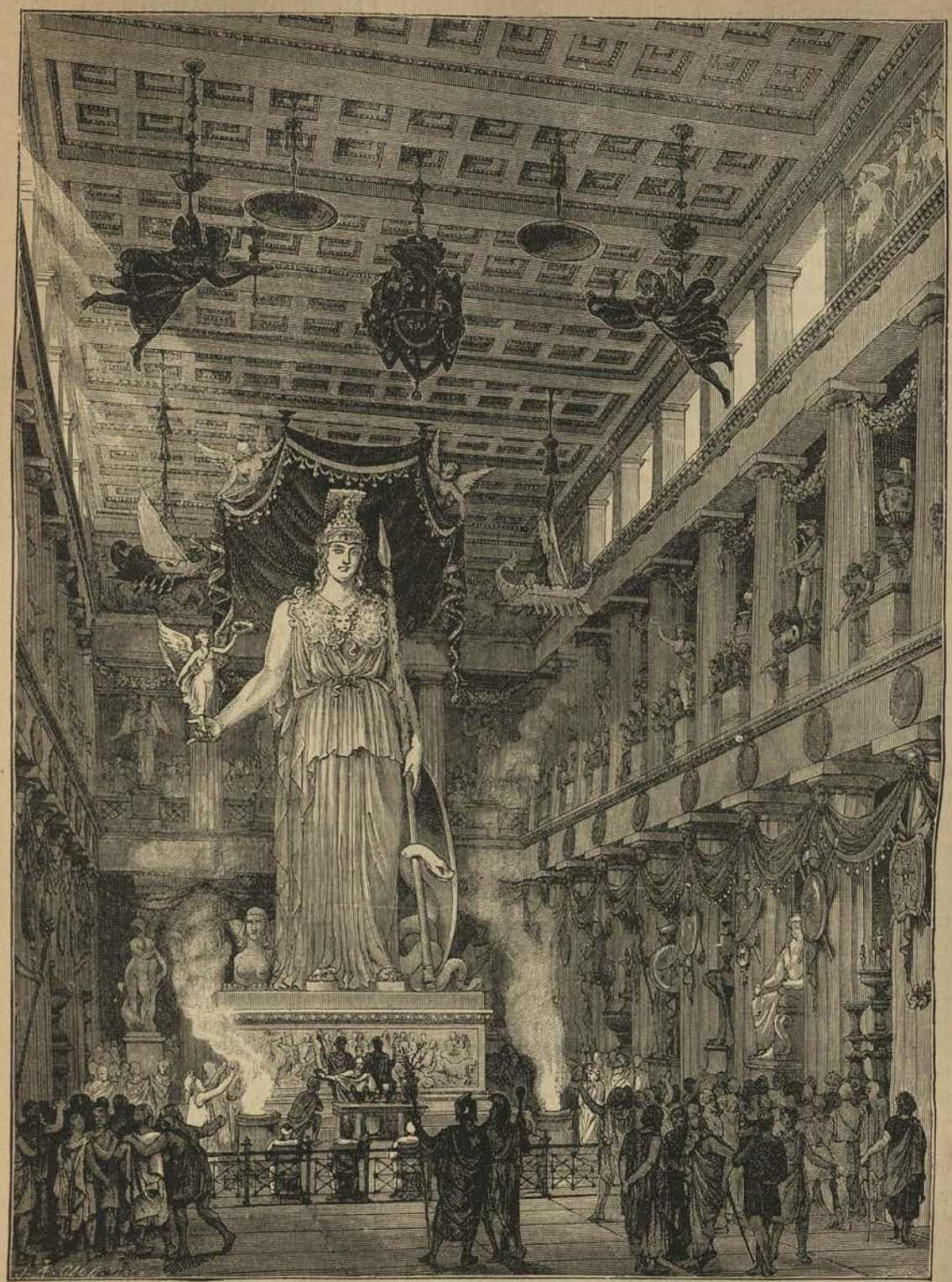
The delivery of the Hellenic communities of Asia, however, was a more important matter than the retention of Naxos under a dominion which she would rather have shaken off. At the head of a large naval force, Cimon proceeded to the coast of Asia Minor in 466 B.C., drove out the Persians from several towns in Caria and Lycia, and afterwards defeated both the fleet and the army of Artaxerxes Longimanus at the mouth of the river Eurymedon, in Pamphylia. On his return from this great achievement, he fell in with eighty of the enemy's vessels, which were proceeding as a reinforcement to the scene of the late battle, and destroyed them all. The Athenians were now inflamed with the idea of creating an extensive empire, with colonies and distant possessions; and for a short time it seemed as if the capital of Attica would have occupied a position in the world similar to that which was afterwards filled by Rome. Some Athenians at this period endeavoured to form settlements in Thrace, and in so doing came into collision with the people of Thasos, an island on the southern coast of that country, nearly opposite the mouth of the river Nestus. The island was associated with ancient Greek traditions, and had become a member of the Confederacy of Delos; but the inhabitants, though partly Hellenic in composition, were strongly disinclined to the extension of Athenian power on the mainland, where they possessed valuable territory, including some large and profitable mines. In 465 B.C., a fleet was despatched under Cimon to coerce the islanders; but it was not until after a blockade of more than two years' duration that Thasos surrendered. The results of this conquest were, that the continental possessions of the little insular republic were confiscated, that all the fortifications were destroyed, and that the people were forced to pay a war-indemnity and an annual tribute. But the efforts of the Athenians to found settlements on the mainland were attended only by disastrous failure.

The Lacedæmonians, though still in alliance with

Athens, would have helped the Thasians in this war, had they not been prevented by a terrible earthquake which ruined the city of Sparta, and killed twenty thousand of the people, in 464 B.C. The calamity was bad enough in itself, but it was immediately followed by a rising of the Helots and of the agricultural population, who, conceiving that their oppressors were now at a disadvantage, and that the metropolitan city had been visited by divine vengeance for its sins, marched in arms upon the seat of government. The Spartans, however, repulsed the attack, yet not so completely but that the insurgents, on being joined by the Messenians, were enabled to form a fortified camp at Mount Ithome, in Messenia. Hence ensued what is called the Third Messenian War, in which the Lacedæmonians found that their antagonists were more than a match for them in military prowess. The glory of Sparta had for several years been waning. Her policy had always been selfish and despotic; but it had formerly been directed with ability, and with a certain single-mindedness and concentration of strength, which resulted in success. Now, however, the national astuteness was repeatedly at fault, and a deep dishonesty had corrupted many of the leading men. The treachery of Pausanias was succeeded by that of Leotychides, one of the joint kings of Sparta, and the hero of Mycale, who, while arranging the affairs of Thessaly, took bribes from the Persians. A war with the Arcadians had weakened the resources of Sparta; the influence of Elis was extending, while that of the chief Laconian city was decreasing; and the rivalry of Athens was a depressing fact, which contributed with other causes to the decline of the Lacedæmonian predominance.

Finding that they were unable to subdue the Messenians and their allies, the Spartans sought the aid of Athens, which, after some opposition in the popular Assembly, was granted. Cimon was placed at the head of 4,000 troops, with whom, in 461 B.C., he attacked the Helots entrenched at Ithome, but without success. The Athenian troops were then dismissed, and the entire failure of the expedition was extremely damaging to the reputation of Cimon. For the same reason, it advanced the fortunes of the democratic party, which had from the first been opposed to the proceeding, and which could now point to the result as justifying their view. The leadership of that party had for some years been in the hands of Pericles—one of the brightest names in the history of the Athenian Republic. Although the favourite and champion of the populace, he was a man of severe and recluse manners, fond of literature and philosophy, and passing his leisure time with the most profound thinkers of the day. Attached by policy, and perhaps by inclination, to the popular section of the commonwealth, he was nevertheless descended, on his mother's side, from the royal house of Sicyon, and the noble family of the Alcmæonidæ. On the paternal side, he was related to Pisistratus, whom he resembled, both in personal appearance and (to some extent) in character. His talents as a soldier were not conspicuous; yet his greatest enemies were unable to allege against him any want of courage. The gifts and acquirements of Pericles were those of a statesman, where they were not those of a scholar. He cultivated oratory with success, for, without the power of fluent and effective speech, no man could hope to sway the populace of Athens. He was also a close and cautious observer of events; a political leader not incapable of moving general enthusiasm, yet still better fitted to advise with judgment, and to manage with firmness and discretion.

By a curious coincidence, it happened that Xanthippus, the father of Pericles, had been the accuser of Miltiades, the father of Cimon, when the conqueror of Marathon returned from his unhappy expedition against Paros. The mutual antagonism of the two sons may have been partly owing to this circumstance; but it doubtless rested much more on diversity of nature and difference of political convictions. Pericles was a younger man than his rival, and his star rose as that of the other began to decline. The discomfiture of Cimon before Ithome, and the affront put by Sparta upon Athens in dismissing her troops as if they were worthless, furnished the democratic party with an admirable opportunity for decrying their adversaries. The occasion also seemed to Pericles well adapted to the introduction of certain changes into the constitution (unless, indeed, these events are to be referred to a somewhat earlier year)—changes having for their object the diminution of aristocratic privilege, and the extension of popular rights. This he effected by measures reducing the authority of the Areopagus, or Senate, which had always been the stronghold of the oligarchy, and by transferring the judicial powers of the Senate of Five Hundred to *dicasteries*, or jury-courts. Other measures were likewise passed by the popular Assembly at the instance of Pericles, of which the general effect was to render the democracy very nearly supreme. Cimon did his utmost to defeat these reforms; yet they were nothing more than the natural result of tendencies which had been apparent from an early period of Athenian history, and which for several generations had been gathering force. The



INTERIOR OF THE PARTHENON, RESTORED.

unpopularity of Cimon resulted in his ostracism for ten years, dating from 461 B.C.; but the passions of the aristocracy seem to have been exasperated by this decree of banishment. Some time afterwards, a Bœotian was hired by the conservative party to assassinate Ephialtes, a friend of Pericles, who acted as an agent in the prosecution of his political designs, and who was deservedly famous for his virtue and probity. The crime was in truth an outburst of despair. The aristocracy saw that their power was doomed, and they wreaked their vengeance on the man whom Pericles employed as his most effective weapon. It is satisfactory to add that Cimon appears to have had no part in the atrocious deed.

The education of Pericles was such as to qualify him for the work of statesmanship in a community like that of Athens, where intellectual acquirements were valued more than birth or fortune. Even in his youth, he travelled far beyond the ordinary routine of studies, and sought the guidance of philosophers known for the boldness and range of their speculations. Damon is said to have given him lessons in politics, under pretence of instructing him in the science of music. Zeno of Elea trained him in the dialectical arts which made him so formidable a disputant in the Assembly that his rival Thucydides (not the historian, but a kinsman of Cimon) remarked, "When I throw Pericles, he always persuades the bystanders that he has not been down." From Anaxagoras he derived those ideas of pure Theism, distinct from the Polytheistical beliefs of the vulgar, which brought on the philosopher himself a charge of impiety, but had no other effect on Pericles than to strengthen and enlarge a mind not made for superstition. The influence of Anaxagoras was indeed felt by Pericles in many ways. The manners, the habits of thought, and even the style of eloquence, adopted by the statesman, were due to the sage; and the teaching of Anaxagoras is credited with the formation in his pupil of a serene and dignified condescension, very useful in one who had to sway the passions of an excitable and impulsive democracy. In personal appearance, Pericles was handsome and majestic, except for an excessive length in the head; and some discovered in him a likeness to the statues of the god Dionysus, or Bacchus.

Though not remarkable for private liberality, like Cimon, nor disposed to freedom of intercourse with the populace, Pericles was careful never to offend the sentiment of democratic self-esteem on which he relied for support; indeed, in many ways he flattered and consulted it. After the accomplishment of his judicial and political reforms, he caused the tablets containing the statutes of Solon to be brought down from the Acropolis, and set up in the market-place, in order to signify that the guardianship of the laws had been transferred to the people. Patience under insults was one of the qualities by which he attained to power. It is recorded of him by Plutarch that, having been grossly affronted in the Assembly by a citizen, who followed him to his house at night with injurious language, Pericles ordered one of his servants to take a torch, and light the man home. Such actions were doubtless attributable in no small degree to a real benevolence of nature; but it is probable that they had an element of policy in them also, for Pericles had determined from an early age to rule the Athenian State, and a friendly reputation with the commonalty was essential to his design. It was as a member of the general Assembly of the people—to which, it will be remembered, no election was necessary—that Pericles first won distinction as an orator and a reformer. He began to take a leading part in affairs in 469 B.C., at which period Themistocles was in banishment, and Aristides near the end of his life; and, having established his popularity beyond all competitors, he was, in 461 B.C., chosen as the first of the ten Strategi, or Generals, who were the chief executive officers of the State. The First Strategus was in truth the Prime Minister of the Republic; and, although the post was dependent on annual re-election, Pericles retained possession of it for thirty-two years—from 461 B.C. till his death in 429. For the last fifteen of these years (that is to say, from 444 B.C.), he was so free from effective rivalry as to be, in all but the name, a monarch, or dictator, of great influence and power.

One of the great aims of Pericles was to reduce the influence of Sparta to the utmost extent, and he gladly availed himself of every opportunity for promoting that end. During the revolt of the Helots, and the progress of the third Messenian war, Argos, which had always claimed for herself a certain pre-eminence in Greece, on the strength of her old heroic legends, reduced beneath her rule the Peloponnesian towns of Mycenæ, Tiryns, and some others in the vicinity. Upon this, the Athenians under Pericles at once effected an alliance with Argos. The Thessalians were soon afterwards induced to join the league, and the common object of all was antagonism to Sparta. An alliance between Athens and Megara was next concluded; and this, by giving to the former possession of the passes of Mount Geraneia, placed the whole of the Peloponnesus at the mercy of an Athenian army. The

situation of Megara was on a hill, and Pericles caused the city to be united with the port of Nisæa, nearly a mile distant, by two parallel lines of walls, within which he placed a permanent garrison.

While advancing the power of Athens beyond the limits of Attica, Pericles was not unmindful of the city itself. He advised the construction of the famous "Long Walls" which connected the Piræus and Phalerum with the metropolis, and which were a further extension of that system of defence which had been originated by Themistocles. From Phalerum to Athens, the wall was about four miles long; from the Piræus, it was four miles and a half. Thus, the whole space between Athens and her two ports was enclosed within immense lines of fortifications. The works were executed between the years 458 and 455 B.C. The aristocratic party, which was opposed to any ambitious assertion of the national strength, endeavoured to hinder the erection of these walls; but it was felt by the majority that Athens must remain a great naval State, and that, unless her fleet was protected by impregnable defences, it might be successfully attacked. In these matters, Pericles was undoubtedly a faithful exponent of the popular will, and for that very reason was regarded with distrust by other Grecian States. The Spartans were still engaged with the siege of Ithome; indeed, the revolt of the Helots was not suppressed, nor the third Messenian war concluded, until 455 B.C. But Corinth and Epidaurus, believing that the ascendancy of Athens was assuming dangerous proportions, and resenting in particular the subjection of Megara to the designs of that Power, concluded a league with some of the Peloponnesian States; and at the same time the Æginetans made a final effort to recover their lost supremacy at sea. The naval forces of the allies came into collision with the Athenian fleet off Ægina, but were utterly defeated, with the loss of seventy ships. The power of the Æginetans was now entirely ruined, and the conquerors, landing a military force upon the island, laid siege to the capital. An attack by the Corinthians upon the Athenian troops in Megara was equally unfortunate. These events occurred in 457 B.C., and were followed by some operations on the part of the Lacedæmonians, which were conducted, in the first instance, under pretence of assisting the Dorians to repel an invasion of their territory by the Phocians.

The army set in motion for this purpose was so large that the Phocians speedily retired, and the Lacedæmonians then directed their forces against the Athenian ascendancy in Bœotia, where the influence of Thebes had to a great extent disappeared, owing to its unpatriotic conduct during the Persian inroad. Having obtained a footing in Bœotia, the Spartans at once rebuilt the fortifications of Thebes, and restored the Theban sovereignty over the neighbouring cities. The aristocratic party at Athens favoured these designs of Sparta, and even invited the soldiers of that State to assist in overthrowing the democracy of Athens. The Lacedæmonians, always jealous of their rival, took up a position at Tanagra, a little beyond the borders of Attica. A large part of the Athenian army was at that time engaged in Ægina; but the rest of the forces, together with some allies, crossed the borders into Bœotia, and attacked the Lacedæmonians at Tanagra. The battle which ensued was long and sanguinary, and might have resulted in the triumph of the Athenians, had not the Thessalian cavalry deserted their comrades at a critical moment. The result was that the Lacedæmonians retained possession of the field, but, being unable to follow up their victory, were glad to effect a speedy retreat into the Peloponnesus. On this occasion, Pericles commanded in person, and the events of the day furnished an opportunity for the reconciliation of that statesman with his great opponent, Cimon. Before the battle commenced, Cimon, who still lay under sentence of ostracism, and who was suspected (though unjustly) of being in correspondence with the Lacedæmonians, presented himself before the Athenian army, and entreated permission to take his place among the ranks. This being refused, he left his armour with some friends, who, carrying it with them into the field, fought as if animated by his presence. A hundred of these partizans of the aristocracy fell in the encounter, and public feeling underwent a great reaction in favour of the oligarchy whom Cimon had always supported. It appeared to Pericles himself that Cimon had been unfairly treated, and he proposed that his banishment should be revoked. This was done, and the exiled leader returned to Athens. The battle of Tanagra was fought in the latter part of 457 B.C.: whether Cimon re-entered his native city immediately afterwards, or some years later, is a matter of doubt; but it is generally supposed that his recall was not long delayed after the signal proof of patriotism which he had given in the fields of Bœotia.

The defeat of the Athenians at Tanagra was so much an affair of accident, and so slightly removed from a success, that Pericles again sent an army across the frontiers in 456 B.C. The commander on this occasion was Myronides, who gained a decisive victory over the Bœotians at Œnophyta, and

established the Athenian power in Thebes itself. The adherents of Sparta were banished, and a democratical form of government succeeded one of less popular character. The reduction of Ægina was completed in 455 B.C., and the island now became a tributary ally of Athens. In the following year (454 B.C.), an Athenian armament of fifty galleys, having a large body of troops on board, under the command of Tolmides, sailed round the Peloponnesus, burnt the Spartan arsenal at Gythium and the port of Methone, captured Naupactus, on the northern shores of the Gulf of Corinth, defeated the Sicyonians who attempted to oppose the landing of the troops, and obtained other successes which struck terror into the southern peninsula. The war in Messenia had just reached its termination, and the Spartan Helots at Ithome had been treated by their former masters with a degree of clemency which, considering the general character of the Lacedæmonians, was hardly to be expected. Acting, as they alleged, in obedience to an oracle, the victors allowed their rebellious serfs, together with the Messenian captives, to quit the Peloponnesus, though on the understanding that, should they return, they would be kept in perpetual slavery. With their wives and families, they quitted the scene of their long struggle, but might perhaps have found it difficult to acquire a new home, had not Tolmides settled them at Naupactus, which, until taken by the Athenian admiral, had belonged to the Ozolian Locrians. The islands of Zacynthus and Cephalonia, off the western coast, were brought over to the Athenian alliance during the period of this expedition, and it is possible that some of the coast-towns of Achaia were also induced to acknowledge the suzerainty of Athens. These were brilliant successes, and Pericles was now the acknowledged head of a confederacy which extended from the Gulf of Corinth to the passes of Thermopylæ. Yet in one quarter the national arms were attended by very serious disasters. This was in Egypt, where the Athenians aided the revolt of Inarus against the rule of Persia—a revolt which, commencing in 463 B.C., terminated some time after in the complete re-establishment of the Asiatic power. In the course of this struggle, the Athenians suffered some terrible reverses, which have been detailed in a previous Chapter.*

A five years' truce between the Athenians and the Lacedæmonians was concluded in 452 B.C. Cimon was the mediator by whose agency this truce was arranged, and his motive seems to have been a desire to suspend all internal hostilities, that he might with the greater safety resume operations against the Persians. The Egyptian rebel, Amyrtæus, still exercised a species of sovereignty among the marshes of the Delta, where he defied the power of Artaxerxes. Understanding how precarious was his position, he begged assistance from the Athenians, and to grant this aid was one of the objects of Cimon's expedition. With a fleet of two hundred triremes, the Greek commander departed for the East, when, having despatched sixty vessels to Egypt, he commenced the siege of Citium, in Cyprus, with the remainder. While conducting these operations, Cimon expired, either from disease, or from the consequences of a wound, and Anaxicrates, upon whom the command devolved, found himself unable, owing to shortness of provisions, to continue the siege. He therefore sailed away, but, not far from the Cyprian Salamis, fell in with a great fleet of Phœnician and Cilician galleys, which he wholly defeated. This success was immediately followed by a battle on shore, equally favourable to the Athenian arms. It might have been fairly supposed that, after two such fortunate events, Anaxicrates would have continued the campaign; but he seems to have been again crippled by a deficiency of stores, or perhaps by the outbreak of a pestilence among his men. At any rate, he waited only for the return of the sixty vessels which had been sent to Egypt, and which were unable to effect anything of importance. When these rejoined the main body of the fleet, the whole force sailed home, in 449 B.C.

The long period of hostility between Persia and Greece was brought to a close, shortly after these events, by what is generally described as the Peace of Callias, so called from the Greek negotiator who had the management of the transaction. Within less than a century of the death of Cimon, it was believed by many that this peace was concluded by him; but the fact appears extremely doubtful, though it is probable enough that the brilliant successes of Cimon contributed largely to the result. The main provisions of the compact were, that the Persians should abandon the military occupation of Asia Minor, to the distance of three days' journey on foot, or one on horseback, from the coast—if not, as, some accounts suppose, the whole peninsula west of the Halys; and that they should abstain from sailing west of the Cyanean rocks, near the mouth of the Bosphorus, and of the Chelidonian islands, on the south coast of Lycia. Athens, on her side, agreed to refrain from any further attempts upon Cyprus and Egypt. Such, at least, were the arrangements which are said to have been concluded between these two powerful

* See Chapter X.

belligerents; but some modern historians have doubted the existence of the alleged treaty. It is certainly remarkable that Thucydides says nothing of the transaction, and that the statements of later authors are in some respects contradictory and unclear. Yet it can hardly be questioned that an understanding of this nature, though it may have been an informal one, was established between Persia and Athens about the year 449 B.C.; for it is clear that the previous state of hostility, which had lasted half a century, came to a conclusion at the time to which the Peace of Callias is referred.* Nevertheless, the Persians of a later day seem not to have acknowledged that they had ever resigned their claims over the Asiatic Greeks.

It is probable that the overtures for peace came from Artaxerxes, and his motives are not difficult to discover. He feared that the Athenians would continually excite the Egyptians to rebellion, if they obtained a permanent hold on Cyprus. Even for its own sake, indeed, the loss of that island would have been a serious misfortune to Persia, for it was valuable in itself, and had always been coveted by the Eastern Monarchies. The history of the island shows it to have been the frequent battle-ground of rival powers and antagonistic nationalities. It was probably the Kittim or Chittim of the Old Testament; but the original population is so lost in the mists of antiquity that its exact nature cannot be stated. At an early period, Cyprus was colonised by the Phœnicians, and Astarte was worshipped there with peculiar honours. This was the deity afterwards identified with the Greek Aphrodite and the Roman Venus, who was always regarded as the Cyprian goddess. Greek colonists are said to have entered Cyprus about the period generally ascribed to the Trojan war, and these Hellenic settlements afterwards increased, so that it was not unnatural that the Athenians should feel an interest in Cyprus hardly less vivid than the interest of the Orientals themselves. The island had in turn been possessed by Egypt, by Assyria, by Babylon, and by Persia; but in the intervals of these dominations the territory was divided into a number of petty kingdoms, where a race strangely compounded of Phœnician, Hellenic, and other nationalities engaged in commerce, and cultivated the arts with a degree of success which made them famous among all the Mediterranean countries. The conquest of Cyprus by Persia has been attributed to Cyrus; at any rate, the island formed part of the Persian dominions in the reign of Cambyses. Some of the Cypriotes, however, detested the Persian yoke, and in 502 B.C. they rose in insurrection. Onesilaus, younger brother of Gorgos, King of Salamis, took possession of the city, persuaded the island to revolt, and obtained succour from Ionia, which sent him a considerable fleet. The Cypriote army was large and well appointed, and came into collision with the forces of Persia on an open plain near the sea-shore. The Persian commander was Artybius, and the legs of his horse were cut off during the battle by a blow from a scythe, adroitly dealt by a Carian as the animal was rearing into the air. Artybius, falling to the ground, was immediately slain; yet victory declared for the Persians, owing partly to the defection of some of the islanders. Onesilaus himself was among the killed; and although at sea the Phœnician fleet was defeated by the Ionians, the disaster to the Cypriotes on shore proved fatal to the movement.† The Ionian vessels returned to their own States, and the Persians overran the whole of Cyprus. For a century later, the Phœnician colonies of Cyprus supported the Persian rule, and held in check the settlements of Grecian origin. A hundred and fifty ships were contributed by Cyprus to the expedition of Xerxes against Greece, and amongst the lieutenants of the Persian monarch were two Cypriote kings. Such were the events which led to the interposition of Athens in the affairs of Cyprus. The enterprise of 478 B.C., to which allusion has been made, seemed likely at one time to be attended by great results; but it led to nothing permanent, nor was the renewed attempt in 449 B.C. any more successful. The Phœnician element in the population of Cyprus was evidently stronger than the Grecian, and it seems not unlikely that the so-called Peace of Callias consulted the wishes of the majority in determining that the island should remain beneath the sway of Persia.

The power of Athens was now at its height. Not merely over a large part of northern Greece, but even on the outskirts of the Peloponnesus, her authority was recognised as paramount. The custody of the fund belonging to the Confederacy of Delos was transferred from that island to the capital of Attica, and, with the exception of Chios, Lesbos, and Samos, the States which formed the league had quietly accepted the position of tributaries to the Athenian Republic. A species of Imperial power was thus established, and the allies

* The reality of the Peace of Callias has been disputed by Bishop Thirlwall and some Continental writers, but defended by Mr. Grote.

† Herodotus, Book V., chaps. 108–13.

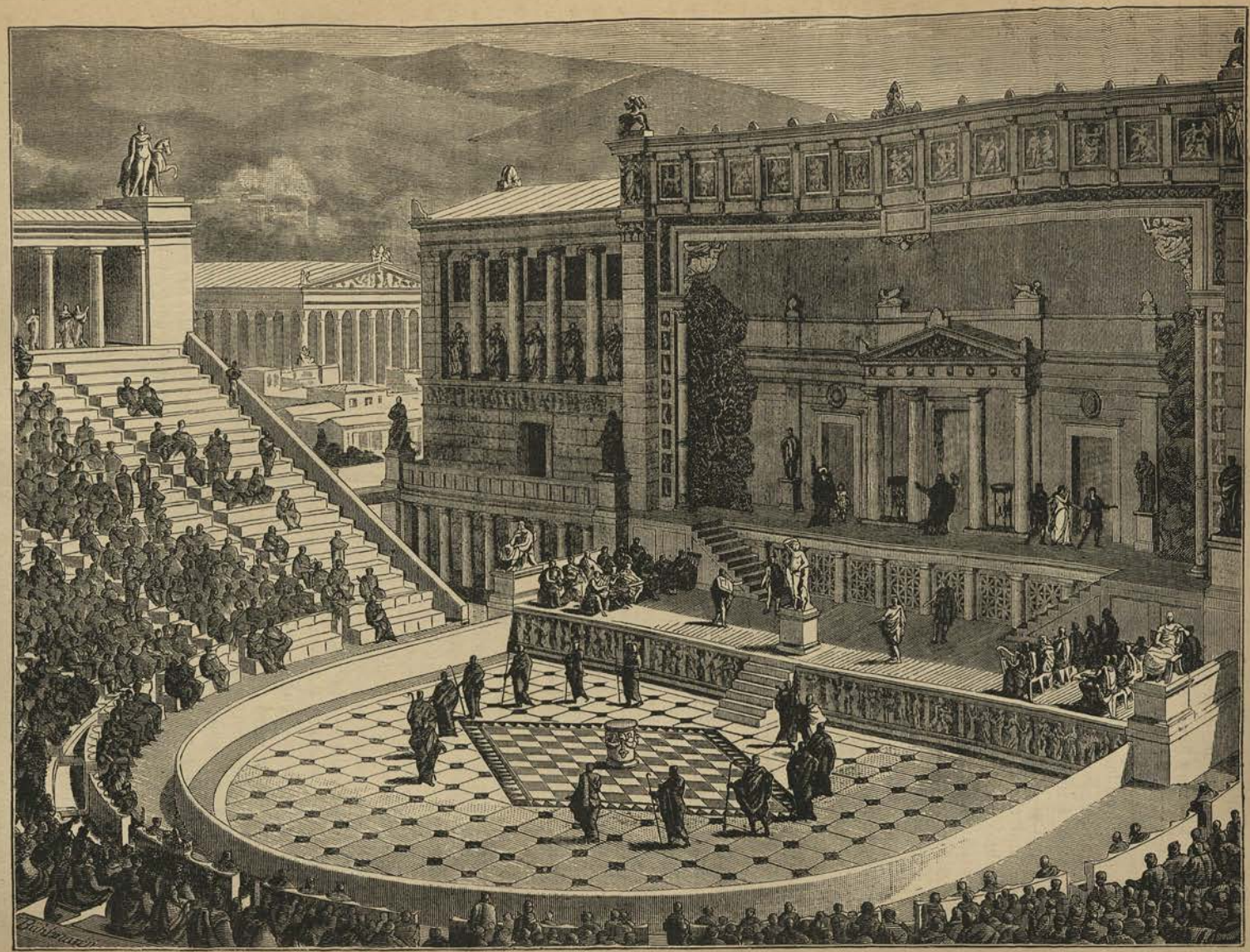
of Athens, who were in truth her subjects, were bound to furnish military service, and to make their foreign policy conform to that of their masters. Some of the Confederate States, indeed, were reduced to a still more thorough subjection: Ægina and a few of the other islands were little more than provinces of the powerful commonwealth whose seat of government was on the Ilissus. Pericles, though never assuming the title or the insignia of a king, was in fact a monarch of no small pretensions; and Athens, now beautified by art, was the worthy capital of a dominion, not, perhaps, very extensive, yet embracing a number of communities remarkable for activity, enterprise, and intellectual vigour. The year 448 B.C. marks the greatest height of the Athenian power. Sparta was so completely thrown into the shade, that when she restored the sanctuary of Apollo to the Delphians, who had been dispossessed by the Phocians, the Athenians at once reversed the proceeding, and replaced the Phocians in the position from which they had been just expelled. Yet this ascendancy was extremely short-lived.

BUST OF PERICLES.

In the very next year (447 B.C.), a revolution in Bœotia deprived Athens of her predominance in that country. A small band of volunteers, under the command of Tolmides, ventured, on their own responsibility, to attack the insurgents, although Pericles had urged them to wait until they had collected a more numerous force. The assailants were totally defeated at Chæronea, and Tolmides himself lost his life, together with many others. The prisoners taken by the insurgents were so numerous and important that, in order to recover them, the Athenians agreed to quit Bœotia, to restore the exiles, and to permit (except in the case of Platæa) the re-establishment of the former aristocratic governments under the supremacy of Thebes. The Phocians and Locrians followed the example thus set. Eubœa and Megara threw off their allegiance to Athens in 445 B.C., and, as the passes leading through Mount Geraneia from the Isthmus of Corinth into Attica were now laid open, and the five years' truce had expired some time before, the Spartans made preparations to invade Attica itself. The threat was speedily fulfilled, and Pleistoanax, the youthful King of Sparta, penetrated as far as Eleusis, where Pericles, fearing for the safety of his capital, procured by bribes the retirement of the invaders. The Spartan monarch and his chief adviser were banished for thus abandoning an expedition which seemed hopeful of success; and even Pericles, on rendering his annual account, is said to have veiled the irregular application of public money by simply stating that it was spent "for a necessary purpose."

When the Spartans first entered Attica, Pericles was engaged in an expedition for the re-conquest of Eubœa. This he hastily quitted, in order to make arrangements with the invaders, and, having effected his purpose, resumed the work which he had taken in hand. His naval and military force being extremely powerful, he was not long in reducing the island, whence he expelled several of the landowners, conferring their estates on Athenian colonists. The power of Athens was thus restored over the insular territory of Eubœa; but on the continent her authority could not be re-asserted. She still possessed a splendid fleet; her armies were as valiant and as well disciplined as ever; but the States whose freedom she had absorbed were strong in their determination to preserve the independence to which they had been accustomed, and even the genius of Pericles was unable to break down their resolution. The designs of that brilliant statesman were not wholly unreasonable or unjust. He doubtless perceived that the weakness of Greece lay in her multitudinous subdivisions; and he may have hoped to establish a Republican dominion, with Athens for its capital, which should be powerful enough to resist the assaults of Persia, or rather to deter that monarchy from making any renewed attempts upon the integrity of Hellas. Plutarch says that Pericles carried a decree through the Assembly for inviting every Greek State, even including the islands and the Asiatic colonies, to send deputies to a general Congress at Athens, where they should debate on matters partly religious and partly political; but it appears that the design was counter-worked and defeated by Sparta, against whose jealousy of Athens it was mainly directed.* If Pericles could have gained the consent of the other Grecian States to the formation of a federal commonwealth, he would in truth have performed a most admirable work, and the smaller republics might not, under those circumstances, have objected to the leadership of Athens which

* Life of Pericles.



THEATRE OF DIONYSUS AT ATHENS.

had obtained an intellectual pre-eminence of the most indisputable kind. Union was the one thing needed to make Greece the greatest nation in the world; and it may have been a sublime dream of union which suggested the political ideas of Pericles. But unfortunately there was too much of personal ambition and of local arrogance in the methods he adopted, and union itself became impossible when it took the form of tyranny. Bœotia and the Peloponnesian States were now incensed against Athens, and the future seemed dark with hidden perils, which were not unlikely to follow soon upon the mortifications of the present. Under these circumstances, Pericles consented, in 445 B.C., to conclude a truce for thirty years with the Spartans and their allies, to surrender his conquests in the Peloponnesus, and to permit the return of Megara to the Confederacy of the South.

Athens in the age of Pericles was distinguished not merely for its military triumphs, but for its intellectual achievements. The early productions of Greek literature had been succeeded by works of a more varied character, and the first tentative and immature speculations of philosophy had ripened into elaborate systems of metaphysics, which have to some extent directed the whole course of modern thought in the science of mental phenomena. After the expulsion of the Pisistratidæ from Athens, in 510 B.C., literature underwent a rapid and vigorous development, and the drama shortly took a position of great importance among those influences which shaped and modified the Athenian temperament. Neither tragedy nor comedy, however, originated with the Athenians: they arose among the Dorians, and were at first connected with the worship of Dionysus, or Bacchus. The earliest dramas were little more than a wild collection of dithyrambic songs and tumultuous dances, the performers of which clothed themselves in goat-skins, in order to assume the character of satyrs, since those were among the most constant attendants on Bacchus. The meaning of the word tragedy is literally "a goat-song." Comedy was associated with the festival of the vintage, when the country people who took part in these entertainments went about from village to village in rustic carts, and with faces smeared with the lees of wine, entertaining themselves and others with extemporary jests and satirical invectives. The goat-songs which went by the name of tragedy were sometimes, though not always, of a mournful nature, having reference to the sufferings of Dionysus; and thus tragedy in the modern sense arose out of its primeval forms. A more truly dramatic character was given to these performances by Thespis, a native of Attica, who lived in the time of Pisistratus. The actors in his plays wore linen masks, by means of which one performer was able to assume several characters in the same piece. Thespis was succeeded by Chœrilus and Phrynichus; but the first of the really great Athenian dramatists was Æschylus, who was born at Eleusis in 525 B.C., and died at Gela, in Sicily, in 456 B.C. To Æschylus is ascribed the introduction of painted scenes, of magnificent dresses, of masks more expressive than had been used before, and of high-soled shoes, called buskins, which gave to the actors the appearance of heroic size. Sophocles was born in the neighbourhood of Athens in 495 B.C., and, dying in 406 B.C., in his ninetieth year, was the contemporary of Pericles during a large part of his life. To Sophocles is generally conceded the proud position of the greatest among the Greek dramatists, though there are critics who dissent from this estimate.* The art received a new development in the hands of Euripides, who was born in the island of Salamis in 480 B.C., of parents who, with many others, had fled thither in those unhappy days when Attica was desolated by Xerxes. Comedy was used by the Athenians as a means of political satire, and very great was its influence amongst that quick-blooded and impressionable race. The chief comic writer of the age of Pericles was Cratinus: Aristophanes, who was by far the most illustrious of the Greek writers of comedy, was not born until about fifteen years before the death of Pericles.

Of Greek historians, one of the earliest was Hecatæus, who survived until the close of the Persian war, and who mingled geographical with historical research. The writings of Herodotus are so well and generally known that little need be said of them in this place. The Father of History, as he is often but incorrectly called, was a native of the Dorian colony of Halicarnassus, in Caria; but his admiration of Athens, and his devotion to that State, give him almost the character of an Athenian. He too was a contemporary of Pericles, whom, however, he survived many years. His nine books of history are amongst the most valuable, as well as the most amusing, productions of ancient literature. Though containing a large amount of fable, they abound in facts which give a singularly vivid impression of the ancient world, not merely as to Greece, but also as to the chief Asiatic States, and the great African

* Mr. Mahaffy, in his admirable "Social Life in Greece, from Homer to Menander" (1874), gives Sophocles the lowest place, and apparently regards Euripides as the greatest master of Greek tragedy.

theocracy of Egypt. Probably no author is so frequently quoted as an authority for bygone customs, and none is so great a favourite with those who desire to place themselves in vivid sympathy with the very life of that magnificent and stately world which he describes. Another great ornament of the age of Pericles was the Athenian Thucydides, who was born in 471 B.C. He is the historian of the Peloponnesian War, the course of which we have yet to relate. The events he there details occurred in his own time, and, while they were progressing, he collected the materials which afterwards formed the groundwork of his history. The narrative is incomplete, since it breaks off in the middle of the twenty-first year of the struggle; but what we possess is beyond price. Thucydides has the credit of great impartiality, and his descriptions are often characterised by force and picturesqueness.

The era of Pericles was great in art as well as in literature. Athens was then adorned with some of her most magnificent structures, such as the Parthenon, or Temple of Athene; the Odeum, a theatre designed for musical performances; the Propylæa, or western entrances to the Acropolis; the Erechtheum, a re-construction of some more ancient temple; a sacred building for the celebration of the Eleusinian Mysteries; and other works. When it is remembered that many of these edifices were of Pentelic marble, glittering with the white purity of that costly stone,—that they were often adorned with splendid paintings, with sculptures, and with bas-reliefs,—and that the whole stood out against a violet-tinted sky, under an atmosphere so intense and luminous as to give something of beauty even to the meanest objects,—we may form a faint conception of the ideal loveliness of Athens in its prime. The Long Walls connecting the city with the Piræus have already been mentioned, and the Piræus itself was improved by the construction of a new dock and arsenal. This was the age of the great sculptors, Phidias, Polycletus, and Myron. The painter Polygnotus belongs also to the same superb epoch. He was a citizen of Thasos, but was afterwards naturalised at Athens, where he adorned some of the public buildings with the creations of his genius. He improved very greatly on the stiff, archaic style that prevailed previously to his time; but it would appear that even in *his* works the manner was rather statuesque than such as we associate with the greater mobility and warmth of painting. Apollodorus, Zeuxis, and Parrhasius, belong to a somewhat later period, and carry us beyond the time of Pericles, with which at present we are concerned.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

ATHENS AND SPARTA: BEGINNING OF THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR.

The Aristocratic Party at Athens under the Guidance of Thucydides, the Son of Melesias—Arbitrary Appropriation by Pericles of the Delos Treasure—Ostracism of Thucydides—Athenian Magnificence—Subjection of the Greek Islands—Revenues of the State—Athenian Colonies—Conquest of Samos—Action of Corinth towards Athens—War between Corinth and Corcyra—The Two Confederations—Corcyra aided by the Athenians—War between Athens and Corinth—The Peloponnesian War—Preliminary Negotiations between Sparta and Athens—Decline in the Popularity of Pericles—His Relations with Aspasia—Phidias and the Statue of Athene—Attack on Platæa by the Thebans—The Opposing Forces, Peloponnesian and Athenian—Advance of the Spartans and their Allies into Attica—First Campaign of the Peloponnesian War—Measures of Pericles—Public Funeral of the Slain—The Plague of Athens—Effect of the Pestilence on the Position of Pericles—His Last Illness and Death—Democracy and Demagogy—Second and Third Campaigns of the Peloponnesian War—Siege of Platæa, and Surrender of the Town to the Lacedæmonians and Thebans.

With the death of Cimon, the aristocratical party at Athens was reduced to the verge of extinction; yet it still found a spokesman in Cimon's relative, Thucydides, the son of Melesias, who, as an orator, was almost, if not quite, the equal of Pericles. He was likewise an effective party organizer, and, by concentrating his adherents in a distinct body, with a separate position in the Ecclesia, or popular Assembly, where previously they had been dispersed among the rest, he gave them in some respects a greater power of influencing the debates. On the other hand, this arrangement made the paucity of their numbers more conspicuous, and it was not long before they were contemptuously distinguished as "The Few." It cannot for a moment be doubted that the sentiments of the aristocratic faction were opposed to some of the most cherished convictions and desires of the

majority. Yet the principles for which Thucydides struggled had much to recommend them. He questioned the good policy of extending the dominion of Athens at the cost of mortally offending the other States of Greece; and in particular he denied the right of Athens to appropriate to her own purposes the treasure accruing from the Confederacy of Delos. A large part of that revenue had been applied by Pericles to the great public works by which his administration was distinguished. Athens was thus protected by her Long Walls, and beautified by edifices the fame of which is immortal. But nothing can justify the means by which the necessary funds were obtained, and which involved a direct fraud upon the contributaries to the general treasure recently transferred from Delos, and designed for no other purpose than to sustain the cause of Hellas against the might of Persia. On this ground, the arguments of Thucydides were unanswerable, and it was doubtless the exasperation of his incessant attacks which led to his ostracism in 444 B.C.

For the remaining fifteen years of his life, Pericles was nearly absolute in the Athenian Republic; and, being now delivered from all fear of effective opposition,—for the aristocratic party was reduced to impotence by the banishment of Thucydides,—he gave unrestrained scope to the magnificent ideas by which his mind was possessed. The building of splendid temples, and the adornment of the city with sculptures and paintings of the most superb and costly description, proceeded without hindrance. The people of Athens were gifted with a strong artistic sense, and they rejoiced to find their city rapidly becoming one of the finest in the world, especially as so small a portion of the charge was defrayed by themselves. If Athens was to be the seat of an extensive empire, republican in its forms, yet dictatorial in its operations, it would require a metropolis of corresponding dignity and grandeur. Pericles still cherished the most ambitious projects. Although the continental dominions of Athens were lost almost as soon as they had been obtained, most of the islands in the Ægean were held in subjection, and a force of sixty triremes in those waters at once ensured the insular territories from foreign assault, and acted as a check upon any insubordinate feelings which may have existed among the islanders themselves. It is said (but the statement is scarcely credible) that the cities tributary to Athens at this time amounted to a thousand. The tribute derived from them each year was six hundred talents—much more than it had been in the time of Aristides and Cimon, when the peril was so much greater; the total annual revenue of Athens was one thousand talents, or nearly £250,000 of English money; and the accumulated treasure in the Acropolis was nearly ten times as much. The islands were given to understand that obedience was due from them, and would be exacted by force if at any time withheld; they were compelled to fashion their governments according to the Athenian model; all important law-cases were transferred by appeal to the courts at Athens; and it does not appear that the islanders received anything in return but the guarantee of protection against Persia. Among the great designs of Pericles were various schemes of colonisation. A thousand citizens were settled in the Thracian Chersonese; five hundred in Naxos; and two hundred and fifty in Andros. The despot of Sinope, on the southern shores of the Euxine, was expelled by Pericles, who bestowed his lands on six hundred Athenians. Lemnos, Imbros, and Scyros, were occupied by people from Attica, and a large portion of Eubœa was similarly appropriated. Pericles also founded the colony of Thurii in Southern Italy, near the site of Sybaris, which, as already related, had been destroyed by the Crotonians in 510 B.C. The new settlement was formed in 443 B.C.; and six years later it was followed by the colony of Amphipolis, in Thrace, on the borders of Macedonia.

The island of Samos did not long preserve its independence. A war had occurred between the Samians and the Milesians, and, when the latter were defeated, in 440 B.C., they made a complaint to Athens, which was supported by a party in Samos itself. The Samians had taken possession of Priene, on the Ionian coast, and they refused to appear at Athens to answer the statements of their adversaries. As Samos, together with Lesbos and Chios, occupied the position of an independent member of the league which had originally been called the Confederacy of Delos, it would appear that Athens had no right to interfere in the quarrel between the Samians and the Milesians. But Pericles thought differently, and determined to assert the same power over Samos that he exercised over most of the Ægean islands. He therefore fitted out an armament of forty ships, the command of which he retained in his own hands; and the island was speedily reduced to submission. An Athenian garrison was established there; the government was re-fashioned upon a democratical basis, and hostages belonging to the noblest families were transported to Lemnos. The new administration did not survive the departure of Pericles. The aristocracy regained their power, aided by the Persian satrap of Sardis, and, proceeding to Lemnos, regained possession of the hostages.

As soon as the revolt became known to Pericles, he again left for the seat of war, taking with him sixty triremes, with which he attacked the hostile fleets with so much success that the Samians were obliged to seek refuge in their principal city, which capitulated after a siege of nine months. One of the principal generals in command during this expedition was the poet Sophocles. The blow was a crushing one, for the Samians were compelled to destroy their fortifications, to surrender their fleet, and to pay the expenses of the war. Byzantium, which had joined the revolt, submitted at the same time, and the superiority of Athens was now so unmistakably manifested that the feeling amongst all the islands appears to have been one of quiet acquiescence in a supremacy which they had no means of defying, and which might, under possible circumstances, be productive of advantage.

While the struggle was yet continuing, the States opposed to Athens debated among themselves whether or not the Samians should be assisted in their revolt. The feeling of several among the Peloponnesian States was in favour of such a course; but the point was finally settled in the negative through the influence of the Corinthians, who asserted the right of every Confederacy to coerce and punish its refractory members: to which, however, it might fairly have been answered, that it was not the Confederacy which coerced the refractory member, but simply another member. Corinth was now the chief maritime rival of Athens, and she appears to have considered that the maintenance of her own power on the seas was concerned in this doctrine of supremacy. So far, Athens and Corinth were pursuing the same course; but a quarrel between the two Powers ensued a few years later. The people of Corcyra, originally a Corinthian colony, had in time founded the city of Epidamnus (afterwards Dyrrachium), on the mainland of Illyria. According to the Greek custom in such matters, Corinth was the metropolis of Epidamnus as well as of Corcyra, and was therefore compelled, or at least entitled, to take notice of any important matters affecting the condition of either colony. In 435 B.C., the Epidamnians were much troubled by the neighbouring Illyrian tribes, with whom certain oligarchical exiles from their own city had made common cause. The citizens accordingly applied to Corcyra for assistance, which was refused, and the Epidamnians then requested help from the Corinthians, who at once sent out an expedition. This was resented by the Corcyræans, who blockaded the town with a fleet of forty ships. Corinth, however, was not inclined to overlook so palpable a defiance of her original authority as the parent, first of Corcyra, and, through it, of Epidamnus. She despatched another and a larger expedition, which was defeated off Cape Actium; and Epidamnus then immediately surrendered to the blockading squadron.

This reverse was so damaging to the reputation of Corinth that she employed the two following years in making preparations on an enormous scale for retrieving her disaster. Alarmed at what might be in store for them, the Corcyræans sent envoys to Athens to beg assistance from that powerful State. The Corinthians met the representations of their antagonists by arguments tending to show that any interference would be impolitic and unjust; but, although they had an indisputable claim upon the Athenians, on account of their friendly policy during the Samian revolt, the Corcyræan alliance appeared so valuable that Pericles determined on assisting the islanders, and persuaded the Assembly to adopt this view. The condition of Greece had now become that of a double Confederation: the Confederation of the South, which, dominated by Sparta, extended over the Peloponnesus, and in some degree over the western colonies of Sicily and the Italian peninsula; and the Confederation of the North, of which Athens was the head, and which included the Ægean islands, and the Greek communities of Asia Minor. Corinth, as occupying a middle position, and having interests of her own which required careful management, trimmed between the two; while Bœotia and the adjacent States desired nothing more than to be left to their local independence. For some years it had been evident that the mutual jealousies of the two Confederations would lead to a collision, which would in truth be nothing less than a struggle for absolute mastery; and it was one of the principal objects of Pericles to prepare for this struggle, so as to ensure, as far as might be, the success of Athens. An alliance with Corcyra seemed to him advisable, because of the accession of naval power which it would bring. Nevertheless, it was resolved, in order not palpably to violate the Thirty Years' Truce, to conclude nothing more than a defensive alliance with the Ionian island, which was done in the latter part of 433 B.C. If the territory should be positively invaded, the Athenians would render assistance; otherwise, they would take no active steps.

The provisional neutrality was probably not intended to last long: at any rate, it was very speedily broken. In the spring of 432 B.C., the Corinthians attacked the Corcyræans off the coast of Epirus, and inflicted on their navy a severe defeat. An

Athenian squadron of ten triremes was stationed close at hand, and these ships, while taking no part in the battle, did their utmost to save the vanquished islanders from pursuit. The naval fight was followed on the same day by preparations on the part of the Corinthians for effecting a descent on Corcyra itself; and this would probably have been accomplished, but for the appearance of the Athenian triremes, which were believed to be the advanced guard of a larger force, perhaps not far away. The Corinthian vessels accordingly withdrew to the coast of Epirus, and ultimately sailed home, carrying with them a considerable number of prisoners, many of whom were sold for slaves, while some of the better sort were treated with great kindness, in the hope that they might persuade their countrymen to incline towards the Corinthian alliance. An opportunity for revenge, as regarded Athens, was soon forthcoming. Perdiccas, the King of Macedonia, had a quarrel with the Athenians, and accordingly busied himself with inciting to rebellion their tributaries among the Chalcidians and Bottiæans. One of these tributaries was Potidæa, which had originally been a colony of the Corinthians; and when, exasperated by some tyrannical orders from Athens, the people of that city revolted, Corinth determined on giving them support. A reinforcement of two thousand Corinthian troops was thrown into the town, and the Athenians, hastily concluding peace with the Macedonians, against whom they had sent an army, marched without delay to the rescue of Potidæa. The Corinthians were beaten at Olynthus, and, falling back on the city which they desired to snatch from Athens, shut themselves up there, and were soon blockaded both by sea and land.

The aggressive character of the Athenians was now arousing a powerful combination against them. The Lacedæmonians summoned a general meeting of the Peloponnesian Confederacy at Sparta, when the question of peace or war was very fully debated, and an Athenian envoy, who happened to be present, replied with great vehemence to the attacks of Corinth. The final resolution was taken at a meeting of the Spartans alone; on which occasion a vast majority declared for war, notwithstanding that the Lacedæmonian king, Archidamus, was strongly in favour of a pacific policy. A congress of the allies was then summoned, and the determination of Sparta was ratified by a plurality of votes. Thus, at about the commencement of 431 B.C., a state of hostility between the two great divisions of Greece was virtually established. In the main, it had been provoked by the arrogance with which Athens had asserted her sovereign rights, and disregarded the claims of other communities; but it was also due in no small measure to the vengeful feeling of Corinth, who had certainly been unhandsomely treated in the matter of Corcyra, and could not but remember how ill her support of Athens, in regard to the Samian revolt, had been requited. Before any action was taken, however, the Spartans sent several embassies to Athens, with a view to justifying their course, and perhaps with the hope that some concessions might be made, such as would render war unnecessary. In particular, they required the banishment of the Alcmæonidæ for the sacrilege committed, nearly

ATHENIAN WOMEN. (*From the Frieze of the Parthenon.*)

two hundred years before, by members of that family, on the occasion of the revolt of Cylon. This was a blow aimed at Pericles himself, who belonged to that illustrious stock; but it was idle to suppose that the Athenians would sacrifice their

STREET OF THE TOMBS AT ATHENS, RESTORED.

greatest statesman and most capable leader on the demand of an enemy.

Various other claims were put forward by the Spartans, the whole having the general object of preserving or re-establishing the independence of the several Grecian States which Athens was accused of oppressing. These propositions were debated in the Athenian Assembly, and a disposition to preserve peace was evinced by the majority until Pericles arose, and delivered an address of such extraordinary power that the popular feeling was greatly changed. He argued that nothing could finally avert a war between the two rivals for the sovereignty of Greece; he maintained that the resources of the Republic were sufficient to repel the threatened danger; and he advised that Attica should be abandoned to the enemy, and that the people should retire within the shelter of the Long Walls, while the fleet—their main strength—should sally forth, and ravage the coasts of the Peloponnesus. Some degree of concession he was prepared to make, if the Lacedæmonians would act in a similar spirit. The Athenians would give satisfaction for any wrong committed in violation of the Thirty Years' Truce, and they

would not begin hostilities; but they would resist to the utmost any attack that might be made on them. An answer to this effect was adopted by the Assembly, though with some hesitation, and communicated to the Spartan envoys. The state of suspense which had long prevailed, and which to the vigorous intellect of Pericles seemed worse than actual war, was thus brought to a close, and nothing remained but to prepare for the contest.

Once more the master-mind of Athens had prevailed; yet at that very time Pericles had lost some of the popularity which had formerly been his. He was suspected of infidelity in religion, and his friend Anaxagoras was compelled to fly from Athens, to avoid a charge of impiety to the national gods which would probably have resulted in his death. The same accusation was simultaneously brought against the celebrated Aspasia, a Milesian lady of great intellectual accomplishments, of extraordinary personal influence, and of remarkable attractiveness, with whom the name of Pericles is immortally associated. The illustrious Athenian had lived unhappily with his wife, from whom he was at length divorced, when he contracted a species of irregular marriage with Aspasia; for the latter, not being an Athenian, could not be legally united to a man who was. Aspasia was one of a class of women who in Greece were regarded with no little favour, because, despite the freedom of their lives, they possessed an amount of mental culture, wit, and sprightliness, seldom found in the carefully-secluded and badly-instructed wives and mothers of the citizens. To the house of Aspasia, Pericles was a frequent visitor, even before his divorce; thither also went many other of the most conspicuous thinkers of the time, together with several Athenian women, who desired to enlarge their intellectual horizon by the varied and brilliant conversation which was always to be heard there. Such an arrangement was certain to result in scandal; but many of the stories told to the discredit of Aspasia and her visitors are doubtless false. The comic poet, Hermippus, however, cited her before the dicastery, or jury-court, in 432 B.C., on a charge of irreligion, and Pericles himself pleaded her cause. In the course of his speech he shed tears, notwithstanding his habitual self-control; and Aspasia was acquitted.

Another matter which must have given great annoyance to Pericles was the accusation brought in the same year against his friend Phidias, of having embezzled the gold placed in his hands for adorning the statue of Athene in the Parthenon. It is related of this statue that it was the greatest of the works of Phidias, with the exception of the Jupiter Olympius at Elis; that the nude parts of the body were of ivory, the eyes of precious stones, the draperies of gold, and the helmet and shield highly decorated. The sculptor was forbidden to inscribe his name on the work; but he introduced a portrait of himself, as a bald-headed old man throwing a stone, in the combat between Athenians and Amazons represented on the shield. Pericles also was similarly commemorated, and these facts excited the jealousy and anger of the populace. For this reason, apparently, Phidias was accused of misappropriating some portion of the gold, and the matter was pressed against him with considerable rancour. Whether Pericles himself was included in the charge, is doubtful; but he was unquestionably much concerned for his friend. Anticipating the probability of such an accusation, he had advised Phidias so to arrange the drapery as to permit of its being removed at any time without injury. When, therefore, the honesty of Phidias was called in question, Pericles ordered the gold to be taken off, and weighed before the people. This seems not to have been done, and Phidias is said to have died in prison before the day of trial. The circumstances of his end, however, are very obscure, and, according to some traditions, he died at Elis. The general belief is that this greatest of the Greek sculptors was entirely innocent of the charges alleged against him.

Hostilities commenced in the spring of 431 B.C. (the fifteenth year of the Thirty Years' Truce) by an attack on Platæa, when the Thebans, supported by traitors within the town, presented themselves at the gates, to the number of about three hundred, on a dark and rainy night, when the citizens were fatigued by their attendance at a religious festival. The Platæans had for several years been in alliance with Athens, although themselves a Bœotian race; but the aristocratical faction of the city was in favour of Theban supremacy, and the members of that party treacherously admitted the armed strangers. The Thebans took up a position in the market-place, hoping to be reinforced on the following day by a large body of their fellow-citizens. But the Platæans, having recovered from their first surprise, determined to make an effort for the expulsion of the invaders. In order to establish communications with one another, unobserved by the Thebans, they broke through the internal walls of their houses, and, having concerted a plan of action, proceeded to barricade the streets with waggons. The intruders were attacked at daybreak, and, after a desperate fight, during which they got involved in the narrow and

winding streets of the town, their small numbers were completely crushed. So furious was the opposition they encountered that the women, with loud cries and execrations, threw tiles from the housetops upon their heads. Those who were not killed in the fray retreated in disorder towards the city walls, over which some succeeded in escaping; but the greater number mistook the folding doors of a granary for the gates, and, rushing in, were captured. The reinforcements, on arriving outside the town—their march to which had been delayed by bad weather, and the swollen state of the river Asopus—seized a number of persons as pledges for the restoration of their captured fellows. The Platæans, however, persuaded them to withdraw, on the understanding that the prisoners should then be released; but the promise was shamefully violated shortly afterwards, and a hundred and eighty of the Thebans were massacred in cold blood, as soon as the Platæans had removed all their external property into the city.

This untoward incident precipitated the coming war between Athens and the Peloponnesians. An Athenian garrison was sent to Platæa, and preparations on the largest scale were commenced for encountering the exigencies of a war which every one perceived would be long and bitter. The forces opposed to Athens were undoubtedly most formidable. Of the Peloponnesian States, only two—Argos and Achaia—declined to enter into the league; but the Spartans were supported by the other communities in that part of Greece, by the Megarians, Bœotians, Phocians, Eastern Locrians, Ambraciots, Leucadians, and Anactorians — in other words, by the greater number of the Grecian commonwealths on the mainland. They also counted on the assistance of the Dorian cities in Sicily and the southern part of the Italian peninsula, and were not indisposed to solicit from Persia itself the boon of a Phœnician fleet. On the other hand, the Athenians reckoned among their allies the people of Thessaly and Acarnania, the Messenians whom they had established at Naupactus, the Platæans, the tributary cities on the coasts of Thrace and Asia Minor, and nearly all the islands. The fleet which Pericles had at his command was much greater than that of his adversaries. His army was large, well disciplined, and efficiently equipped; and the treasury of the Acropolis contained the accumulated savings from the Delos tribute, which at that time amounted to about £1,400,000 in coined silver. A still further sum could, on an emergency, be derived from the plate and votive offerings in the temples, while the annual revenue of the Republic, independently of all these resources, was far from inconsiderable. The opposing armaments, therefore, were sufficiently matched to make the final issue doubtful; and when, by the advice of Pericles, the Athenians refused to receive an embassy from the Spartans, which seems to have been prompted by a desperate hope that some compromise might still be effected, the envoy, as he quitted the Attic borders, exclaimed, with a prescience which events fully justified, "This day will be the beginning of many evils to the Greeks."

The reluctance of Sparta to enter upon this internecine war is very remarkable. It appears to have been considered, even after the outbreak of hostilities, that the immense army of the Peloponnesian allies would strike terror into the Athenians, and thus prevent a long and murderous struggle. The Spartan king, Archidamus, believed that the mere threat of invasion would be sufficient, and after the return of the envoy marched slowly towards the Attic border, taking a circuitous road along the Isthmus of Corinth, and apparently expecting that the enemy would open communications at the last hour. In the first place, he made an attack upon the frontier stronghold of Œnoe, and, this proving unsuccessful, moved towards Eleusis and the Thriasian plain, which he reached about the middle of June. Meanwhile, Pericles had not been idle. He perceived that if the Lacedæmonians succeeded in provoking a contest in the open field, they would probably be victorious, and he therefore persuaded his countrymen, though with great difficulty, to abandon their farms and villages, their homesteads, vineyards, and orchards, and to withdraw within the shelter of the Long Walls. The cattle were sent to Eubœa and other adjacent islands; but the overcrowding of human beings within the Athenian ramparts was a serious evil in itself, and one that helped to produce the terrible calamity we shall shortly have occasion to describe. Plots of land which had hitherto been left vacant were now covered with miserable huts; the towers of the city walls, and even the recesses of the walls themselves, were occupied by families; tents were pitched wherever a piece of ground could be appropriated to that purpose; and those who could do no better were content to house themselves in casks. These measures, necessary as they were, created amongst the sufferers a feeling of antagonism to Pericles, and it was only by his intellectual ascendancy that he was enabled to retain the power he had so long wielded.

A body of Athenian cavalry was moving about the Thriasian plain when Archidamus arrived there with his army. These horsemen did but little to

oppose the invaders, and the devastation of the country was so complete that the people in Athens began clamorously to require that they should be led forward to the attack. The Peloponnesians had by this time arrived at the village of Acharnæ, seven miles north of Athens, and the Acharnians within the walls of the metropolis were the loudest in their demand for immediate action. Even Pericles, despite his acknowledged authority and influence, was afraid of meeting the Assembly, and, as the first of the ten Strategi, prevented its meeting until the excitement had somewhat diminished. The only action he deemed it prudent to take was to send out bodies of Athenian and Thessalian cavalry to check the approaches of the enemy; in the meanwhile, he prepared a squadron of one hundred triremes, for the purpose of making inroads on the Peloponnesian coasts. When completed, this armament was joined by fifty Corcyræan ships, and a good deal of execution was done by their united forces. The determination of Pericles not to venture much into the open field was soon justified by events. After remaining in Attica some forty days, without being able to provoke an engagement, Archidamus drew off his army into Bœotia. The Athenians then issued forth, ravaged the territory of Megara, at the eastern end of the Isthmus of Corinth, transported the whole population of Ægina to the Peloponnesian coast, and divided their lands among settlers of their own community. The first campaign of this important war closed about the end of September, 431 B.C., and the Athenians employed the interval of repose in concluding alliances with Thrace and Macedonia, and in making arrangements for meeting the further expenses of the war, with a view especially to the possibility of Athens itself being attacked by a hostile fleet. For encountering so supreme a danger, a reserve of one thousand talents was deposited in the Acropolis, and it was resolved that any one who should propose to touch this sum, unless under the circumstances contemplated, should be punished with death. Cleon, the leather-seller, was now rising into notice as a demagogue of the most vulgar and offensive kind. His influence with the populace was great, and it was an influence which soon proved to be one of the many difficulties which Pericles had to encounter in his conduct of the war.

In the latter part of the autumn, an impressive ceremony was conducted at Athens under the superintendence of Pericles. This was the public funeral which the religion of the Greeks required to be performed over the ashes of the slain. The bodies themselves—or, at any rate, such as could be recovered—had, as usual, been burnt upon the field; but, without the rites of religion, the shades of the dead were supposed to wander restlessly about the banks of the Styx, which they were unable to cross until the celebration of the appointed obsequies. On the present occasion, the funeral oration, which was an indispensable feature in such ceremonies, was delivered by Pericles, and has been preserved by Thucydides.* An eminent modern authority on the manners of the Athenians has observed of this address that it was in every way worthy of the speaker, being comprehensive, rational, and full of sense and substance, as well as of patriotism.† Pericles pointed out the superiority of the Athenian to the Spartan constitution, and averred that even the severity of the Lacedæmonian discipline was unequal to the native force, freedom, and patriotism of the Athenian system. It cannot be doubted that so splendid an address, coming from one who had for many years directed the fortunes of Athens with a preponderance of success, if with occasional failures, must have had an immense effect upon the popular mind, and have nerved even the irresolute to the proper degree of heroism. In the spring of the following year (430 B.C.), the Peloponnesians again entered Attica, and again, during a period of forty days, spread devastation far and wide.

But the Athenians were now visited by an affliction even greater than war. They were stricken by the Great Plague, of which Thucydides has given an account full of gloomy power and minute accuracy. The spread of the disease was doubtless facilitated by the over-population of Athens; but the malady was not engendered there, having originated, several years before, in Ethiopia. From Ethiopia it passed into Egypt; then, quitting the channel of the Nile, it spread westward into Libya, and eastward into Asia. In Europe, it appears to have been first experienced at Rome, and in other parts of Italy. Its next manifestation was in some of the islands of the Ægean, and at length it sprang up with deadly virulence in the Piræus, the port of Athens. The city itself was speedily invaded by this terrible and insidious enemy, whose advent no fortifications could exclude, and whose operations all the science of that time was powerless to avert. The head and throat were first attacked with agonising pains; these afterwards spread over the whole body, and the malady was generally fatal in seven, or at most nine, days. The physicians were unable to arrest the distemper, and a wild spasm of fear, of selfishness, of debauchery, and of crime, swept

* History of the Peloponnesian War, Book II., chaps. 35—46.
† Grote's History of Greece, Part II., chap. 48.

over the city. Vast numbers died, while even those who recovered from the first seizure often expired subsequently from the exhaustion of their sufferings. In many instances, the memory was entirely destroyed by the subtle and mysterious disease, so that the convalescent could neither recognise their friends, nor recall their own identity. Quackery, which always flourishes at such times, was rife at Athens during the year of the Great Plague. Superstitious incantations were performed, in the hope that the wrath of some offended deity might be appeased. Many recalled old prophecies and portentous oracles; others declared that Apollo had promised to help the Lacedæmonians, whether he were invoked or not; others again charged the Peloponnesians with having poisoned the wells. Yet it is a fact immensely to the credit of the Athenians that, in the very midst of the agitation, no people were persecuted, under the blind belief that they had been instrumental in producing the evil. The selfishness of human nature, however, was as painfully apparent at this dreadful crisis as it has always been on the occurrence of similar visitations. The sick were deserted by their nearest relatives, and were attended, if attended at all, only by those who had themselves recovered from the same disease, and were therefore not liable to a second attack. Even the rites of burial were hastily slurred over, or entirely omitted. The streets of Athens were littered with the dead and dying; the steps of the temples were covered with their bodies; and in particular they were found crowded about the wells, to which their burning and intolerable thirst had driven them. An extreme despondency and mental depression seized on all who were attacked—a condition of the faculties which aided in no slight degree the development of the physical evil. Among the prominent symptoms were restlessness and want of sleep; and the heat of fever was added to other afflictions. The exact nature of the disease cannot now be ascertained; but it appears to have been in some respects similar to the plague which so frequently ravaged the cities of Asia and Europe in the Middle Ages, and in much more recent times. That it was accompanied by a frightful poisoning of the blood is evident from two striking facts: viz., that the dogs which preyed upon the corpses died soon after, and that the vultures and other obscene birds which hovered over the scene of death refrained, by some extraordinary instinct, from touching the bodies which otherwise they would have regarded as their most acceptable food. At least a fourth part of the population must have been carried off by this devastating malady; but the epidemic was almost confined to Athens, and to the more populous islands of the Ægean.*

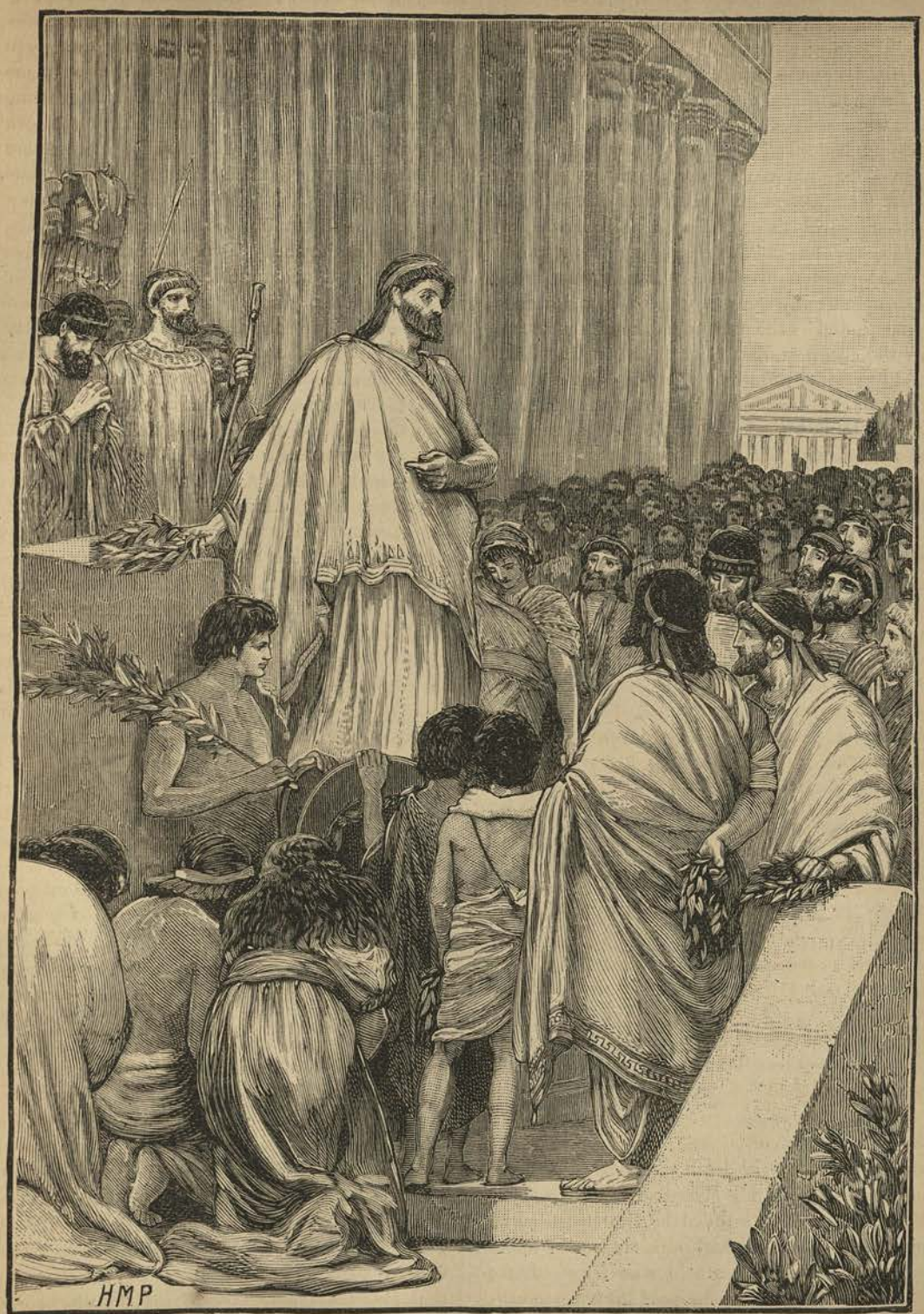
Pericles lost several of his relations during the distemper; amongst others, his sister, and his two legitimate sons, Xanthippus and Paralus. At the funeral of one of these sons, he was overcome with grief; but the firmness of his mind, as a statesman and a general, seems not for a moment to have deserted him. He had a son by Aspasia, to whom he had given his own name, and this child was now legitimised by a vote of the Athenian Assembly. By that time he had recovered much of his popularity; but during the height of the pestilence his enemies were numerous. The misfortunes of the Republic were attributed entirely to him, and people were found to say that, but for the overcrowding of Athens, which was undoubtedly the result of his policy, there would have been no pestilence at all. The opposition of Cleon and other demagogues was characterised by such rancorous bitterness that one of less earnest will than Pericles would doubtless have been swept away. But this extraordinary man never lost heart, even when his country's fortunes were at their darkest. While the plague was still ravaging the city, he fitted out a naval expedition, of which he himself took the command, and, sailing towards the coasts of the Peloponnesus, inflicted serious damage on the enemy. During his absence, envoys had been despatched to Sparta to sue for peace. They had been dismissed without a hearing, and Pericles now felt himself obliged once more to summon an Assembly, that he might obtain the necessary sanction for his acts. So strong was the popular feeling against him at this juncture, that he was brought before the dicastery on a charge of peculation, and sentenced to pay a heavy fine. His enemies hoped in this way to deprive him of his office of First Strategus; but the design failed, and Pericles retained his power to the latest moment of his life. It was at a somewhat later period that his son by Aspasia was legitimised—an act which shows how completely he was then restored to the public confidence he had enjoyed in such ample measure during the earlier days of his career.

But age was now creeping upon him, and the events of the last few years must have done much towards breaking down his strength. After recovering from an attack of the pestilence, he fell into a lingering illness, attended by a low fever, which undermined his physical constitution, and

* Thucydides, II., 47—54.—The historian was himself a sufferer by the epidemic.

left him but little energy for the conduct of affairs. The power of his judgment, however, was not diminished, even when his vitality was at the lowest. One day, while lying on his sick bed, he showed his visitors an amulet which some of the attendant women had hung about his neck, and remarked that he must be ill indeed to endure such a superstitious proceeding. When death was very near at hand, and his friends, supposing him to be insensible, were enumerating his great exploits, he raised himself from his bed, and remarked, "What you praise in me is partly the result of good fortune, and common to many other commanders. That which I chiefly pride myself upon is, that no Athenian ever wore mourning through me." His death took place in the autumn of 429 B.C., the third year of the Peloponnesian war. No man of equal power was ready to assume the direction of affairs, and Athens, in losing Pericles, sustained a misfortune even greater than the plague itself. The faults of this great ruler are sufficiently obvious to act as their own moral; his virtues and gifts were such that men of varied opinions, and of different political aims, have at all periods of history conspired to praise them. Ambitious and dictatorial he may have been; but he was undoubtedly honest and humane. His superiority to the religious prejudices of his day created a strong feeling against him in interested or superstitious circles; but this very quality set Pericles upon a glorious pedestal for succeeding times. No common sobriety and elevation of mind could have enabled him in those days to reassure the terrified pilot on board his fleet when an eclipse of the sun had occurred. The story is that, perceiving the man's alarm, he pulled off his cloak, wrapped it round the head of the pilot, and asked him if there was anything ominous in being thus deprived of light. The man replying in the negative, Pericles further asked him what difference there could be between that darkness and the other, except that what shaded the sun was larger than his cloak. It was this magnificent calmness, this readiness for all emergencies, this comprehension of natural phenomena, this belief in the orderly government of the universe, that made Pericles the super-eminently great man of his age—great not merely in thought, but also in action. In him we behold a democratic leader of the highest type, and therefore, of necessity, a man hated of demagogues. Democracy, which is in effect but the legal and organized expression of the general will, has ever in its composition something dignified and august—perhaps even a touch of something imperious. Such was the nature of Pericles. He could defy the popular gusts of the moment, because he knew that he was a true exponent of the permanent forces and deep-seated aims of the Athenian people. The demagogue flatters sectional interests, exaggerates the fleeting passion of the hour, and has regard for his own interests and his own popularity above every other consideration. Even such a man was Cleon, and he was the enemy of Pericles by that natural law which makes the caricature detest the reality. Democracy has its peculiar faults, like every other development of the human mind; but, in proportion as it truthfully prevails, the demagogue sinks to his real place amongst the dregs of society. Pericles was a statesman such as could have arisen only amongst a people who were masters of themselves.

The second Peloponnesian campaign—that of 430 B.C.—was attended by no very remarkable incidents, though the Lacedæmonians, marching over all parts of Attica, committed the most merciless cruelties upon those who fell into their hands. The Peloponnesian allies now began to make use of their fleet, but were not able to inflict very serious damage in face of the superior naval power of the Athenians. At the beginning of 429 B.C., Potidæa surrendered to the Athenians, after a siege of more than two years. In the ensuing spring, the Spartan monarch, Archidamus, marched against Platæa, and opened negotiations with the citizens. It seemed probable at first that an arrangement would be concluded; but, on an appeal being made by the Platæans to the Athenians, the latter exhorted them to hold out, and promised to send assistance. The Platæans thereupon signified their refusal of the proffered terms, and Archidamus at once proceeded to besiege the place. He erected a mound of timber, earth, and stones before the walls; but the Platæans, with extraordinary determination, elevated their ramparts in a corresponding degree. By secretly working during the night, they caused the ruin of the mound by abstracting the lower portions; and when the adversary counterworked this proceeding, the Platæans hit upon a fresh device. Digging a subterranean passage beneath the walls, they so undermined the opposing earthwork as to cause it to fall in. They also built another wall within the external one, so as to include that portion of the defences which was imperilled by the embankment. The Spartans, after vainly endeavouring to set fire to the place, turned the siege into a blockade, and constructed a double line of walls, together with a double ditch, about the city. In the space between these walls, a large force of Peloponnesians and Thebans was established, and



PERICLES DELIVERING THE FUNERAL ORATION OVER THE ATHENIANS.

in this way the city was blockaded for two years. The resistance of the Platæans was the more creditable because of their extremely slender numbers. The garrison of the city consisted of no more than four hundred citizens and eighty Athenians, with whom were a hundred and ten female slaves, to manage their domestic affairs. In the second year of the siege (428 B.C.), about half the garrison effected their escape on a dark and stormy night of December, which was selected as being favourable to the attempt. The flight was discovered by the Peloponnesian guard before it was completed; but so much confusion was created by the sudden movement, and by the unsteady glare of the torches lit by the besiegers, that most of the fugitives succeeded in getting off, while many of their enemies were slain by well-directed arrows and javelins. It was intended that the whole garrison should vacate the town; but the courage of many failed them at the last moment.

The escape of nearly half the garrison relieved the strain upon the resources of the town, where food was beginning to run short. Nevertheless, the evil day was merely postponed; it could not be entirely averted. The store of food dwindled to the last extremity, and the Spartan commander, being informed as to the state of affairs within the city, sent a herald with a summons to surrender, accompanied by a promise that only the guilty should be punished. The besieged accepted these terms, and gave up their city to the enemy in the summer of 427 B.C. The garrison now consisted of only two hundred Platæans and twenty-five Athenians, who were shortly arraigned before judges sent from Sparta. Their fate was a foregone conclusion, notwithstanding the promise that had been given by Archidamus. Two of their number delivered eloquent and touching addresses, which are recorded by Thucydides; but nothing availed to save them. Every one was executed, and Platæa itself, together with the adjacent territory, was bestowed on Thebes. All the private houses were then destroyed, and this famous city became little more than a military station of its new possessors. In a subsequent age it was rebuilt by Alexander the Great, who highly praised its inhabitants for the valour their ancestors had displayed against the Persians. The treatment of Platæa by the Peloponnesian allies was among the most painful incidents of the war, and its effect was speedily beheld in the increased bitterness with which hostilities were waged.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN ATHENS AND SPARTA.

Progress of the War—Third Invasion of Attica by the Peloponnesians—Revolt of Mitylene—Submission of the City to the Athenians—Severe Measures proposed by Cleon and the Democratic Party—Revulsion of Popular Feeling—Ferocious Contest in Corcyra between the Oligarchical and Democratic Factions—Sixth and Seventh Year of the Peloponnesian War—Seizure of Pylus, in Messenia, by the Athenians—Failure of the Spartans to Dislodge them—Conclusion of an Armistice, and Renewal of the War—Expedition of Cleon against Sphacteria—Prevalence of Demagoguism—Attack on Sphacteria, and Crushing Defeat of the Spartans—Capture of Mount Istone, and Slaughter of the Inhabitants—Massacre of Helots by the Spartans—Eighth Year of the Peloponnesian War—Athenian Invasion of Bœotia—The Battle of Delium—Military Virtues of the Thebans—Events in Thrace—Expedition of Cleon to the North—His Defeat and Death before Amphipolis—Death of Brasidas—Conclusion of a Fifty Years' Truce (the Peace of Nicias)—Formation of an Argive Confederacy—Evasions of the Terms of Peace—Character and Early Life of Alcibiades—His Intrigues against Sparta—Treaty between Athens and the Argive Confederacy—Alcibiades at the Olympic Games—War between Sparta and Argos—Battle of Mantinea—Capture of Melos by the Athenians.

THE year that saw the death of Pericles (429 B.C.) was the third of the Peloponnesian War; but Attica was not then invaded by the Spartans and their allies. The contest was waged in distant localities, and on the whole was favourable to Athens. Besides the surrender of Potidæa, to which reference has already been made, the Athenians had a great success on that element which seemed peculiarly their own. Having determined to annoy the coasts of Acarnania, south of Epirus, the Lacedæmonians sent thither a fleet of forty-seven vessels, which was attacked by the Athenian admiral, Phormio, with only twenty ships. A brilliant victory rewarded the courage of the latter, and the Spartans, even when reinforced by thirty additional vessels, were unable to prevail against their antagonists. The expedition against Acarnania was abandoned; an attempt on the harbour

of the Piræus, which was entirely unprotected, was given up at the last moment; and the Spartans were forced to content themselves with ravaging the island of Salamis. On the other hand, the Athenians failed to take the town of Spartolus, in Chalcidice, and the alliance which had been concluded with Sitalces, king of the Odrysian Thracians, was productive of no important results. Sitalces did, indeed, lead an army (said to have amounted to 150,000 men) into Macedonia, which was in alliance with the Peloponnesians; and he also sent a detachment to reduce the Chalcidians and Bottiæans. But a severe winter caused great sufferings to his troops; the Athenians did not support him with an armament; and Sitalces was obliged to retreat.

The third invasion of Attica was in the fourth year of the war—428 B.C. It was rendered all the more formidable by the revolt of Mitylene, the capital of Lesbos, followed by several other communities in the same island. This movement was supported by the Peloponnesians; but the latter were unable for the present to offer any active aid, and in the meanwhile the Athenian fleet devastated the Isthmus of Corinth and the coast of Laconia. The accumulated treasure in the Acropolis was by this time exhausted, and the recent pestilence had seriously thinned the ranks of the people. Nevertheless, the citizens of Athens preserved their courage and determination. At home, they raised a direct contribution of two hundred talents; and ships were sent forth to collect money from the subject islands. Personal service was required of all citizens, except the two highest classes, and of resident foreigners; and a fleet of one hundred triremes was despatched to blockade Mitylene. A Spartan, named Salæthus, managed to get into the city in 427 B.C., and buoyed up the spirits of the rebellious faction by the news that a Lacedæmonian fleet was on its way to their relief. But when a considerable time had passed without any ships appearing, Salæthus advised a sortie, and the people were armed for that purpose. The rebellion, however, had been the work of the aristocratic party alone, and the democracy now refused to fight, and thus forced a capitulation. A thousand of the chief citizens, together with Salæthus, were sent to Athens, but were permitted to depute envoys to that metropolis for the purpose of pleading their cause before the Assembly. The Spartan fleet appeared off the coast of Ionia shortly afterwards; but the admiral, perceiving that he had come too late, sailed back at once to the Peloponnesus.

At Athens, Salæthus was put to death, and the fate of the Mitylenians was debated with much heat and vehemence. Cleon, the demagogue, who since the death of Pericles had been the most influential man in the Assembly, moved that the prisoners from Mitylene, and even the whole male population of military age, should be slain, and that the women and children should be sold into slavery. This monstrous proposal was actually sanctioned by a majority, and a trireme was immediately sent to the unfortunate city, with orders that the sentence should be carried out. Next day, however, a revulsion of feeling was apparent, and the Strategi, acting in violation of the law, summoned another Assembly to reconsider the question. The animosity of Cleon was no less bitter than before; but Diodotus, the advocate of the Mitylenians, procured by a small majority the passing of an amendment, by which it was determined to place the prisoners on their trial, and to spare the rest of the population. A second trireme was despatched after the first; but it was a doubtful matter whether it would arrive in time. The rowers were allowed but short intervals of rest, and took their food as they sat at the oar. They had been promised large rewards if they succeeded in their mission. This they managed to effect, owing in some measure to the dilatoriness of the earlier crew, who detested the duty with which they had been charged; yet by the time the second trireme reached the port, the original order was in the hands of Paches, the Athenian commander, and preliminary measures for the execution had already been taken. These were of course abandoned on the arrival of the second vessel with the reprieve; but the fortifications of Mitylene were razed, the fleet belonging to the citizens was confiscated, and the greater part of Lesbos was divided among the Athenians. Such acts do not, perhaps, exceed what custom has sanctioned in the treatment of rebel cities; but the slaughter of the prisoners at Athens was a piece of vindictive cruelty, casting a lurid stain upon the annals of the period. Yet the very authors of this crime were ready enough to punish acts of barbarity committed even by their own officers, when these appeared to have no justification in reasons of State. Paches, on his return to Athens shortly afterwards, was accused of murdering two natives of Mitylene, and dishonouring their wives; and his conviction seemed so probable, from the amount of public feeling manifested against him, that he put an end to his life in open court by falling on his sword.

The bitter antagonism of civil strife had by this time nearly destroyed those habits of moderation which formerly characterised the Greeks in matters of war. Corcyra was next the scene of a series of

terrible acts, indicating the existence of a sort of popular madness, or epidemic of ferocity. The Corcyræans who were taken prisoners by the Corinthians after the sea-fight in 432 B.C., and some of whom had been treated with great kindness, were, in 427 B.C., sent back to their own island, under a nominal ransom of eight hundred talents, with a view to their withdrawing their countrymen from the Athenian alliance. The rest of the oligarchical party speedily joined them; the leaders of the democratical body were assassinated in the senate-house; and a resolution was adopted in the popular Assembly, to the effect that the island should thenceforth adopt a strict neutrality between the Athenians and the Peloponnesians. A desperate conflict of the two parties then ensued, and the oligarchs, finding themselves in danger of being overpowered, set fire to the town. The flames were fortunately confined by the wind to the quarter of the docks, where a good deal of property was destroyed; but the intention was doubtless to involve all in a common ruin. An Athenian squadron of twelve triremes now appeared upon the scene. The commander, Nicostratus, composed the discords of the factions with great judgment and humanity, but was soon afterwards obliged to withdraw with his vessels, on the appearance of a Peloponnesian fleet of fifty-three galleys, under the command of Alcidas, who delayed taking any important action while he had yet full possession of the sea. The consequence of his hesitation was that the Athenians had time to send to Corcyra a fleet still larger than that of their opponents; and Alcidas was compelled to retreat with precipitation. This left the oligarchical party completely at the mercy of the democrats, who for seven days glutted their vengeance by acts of the most infernal rage. Even the sanctuaries of the temples were invaded, and the nearest relationship was insufficient to protect members of the unpopular faction from the murderous violence of their enemies. The Athenian admiral, Eurymedon, did nothing to check these frightful excesses, and the massacre ended in the escape of some five hundred of the oligarchs, who fortified themselves on Mount Istone.

The war dragged on with a wearisome elaboration of small details, and the Spartans, notwithstanding their hatred and jealousy of the Athenians, still caught at every excuse for avoiding a direct attack upon their rivals. In the sixth year of hostilities (426 B.C.), they once more refrained from invading Attica, being alarmed at an earthquake which had been felt in several places, and which, in combination with devastating floods and other disturbances, seemed to indicate some anger on the part of the gods. The plague reappeared at Athens towards the close of 427 B.C., and was violently active in 426. During the next year (425 B.C.), an Athenian fleet, the second commander of which was Sophocles, the great dramatist, gave assistance to the democrats of Corcyra against the aristocratical party, who, from their position on Mount Istone, were causing considerable annoyance to the capital of the island. About the same time, a naval station was formed by the Athenians at Pylus, in what is now called the Bay of Navarino. This was on Lacedæmonian territory, and the appearance of the enemy in such a place created so general an alarm that the Peloponnesian fleet was recalled from Corcyra, and the Spartan king, Agis, abandoned Attica after a campaign of only fifteen days. With five ships and two hundred heavy-armed soldiers, the Athenian commander, Demosthenes (who, it is needless to say, must not be identified with the celebrated orator of a later day), took up a position at a favourable spot, and, hastily erecting a wall on the land side, awaited attack. It was not long before offensive operations began. The Spartan admiral, Thrasymelidas, on arriving at the threatened point, occupied the small island of Sphacteria, which nearly closes the neighbouring bay, leaving simply a narrow channel at the northern and southern extremities. The bay lies on the western side of Messenia, about five-and-forty miles from Sparta, and a military post on the mainland would be considerably imperilled by a naval force having command of the long, narrow, and thickly-wooded island which acts as a sort of breakwater to the Ionian waves. Pylus itself was situated on a promontory to the north of Sphacteria, and was much exposed towards the sea, where there was a small open space, on which an enemy could easily land. On the approach of the Peloponnesians, Demosthenes sent two triremes to require assistance of Eurymedon. The other three he hauled up on the beach, and there posted himself with sixty of his best men.

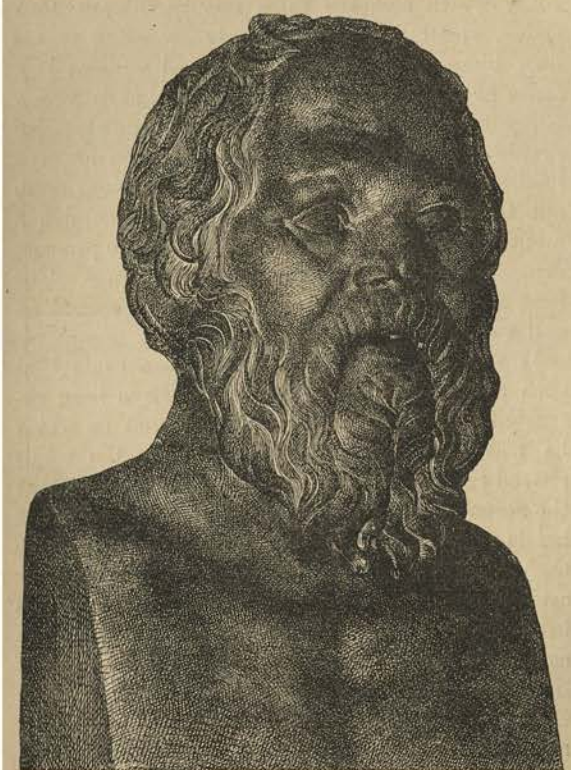
This was the point selected by the Peloponnesians for their operations. The assault was led by the Spartan Brasidas, a commander of great valour and capacity, who had already given proof of his fitness for such an enterprise. Standing on the prow of the foremost ship, he presented an easy mark to the enemy, and was soon so badly wounded that he fell back into the body of the vessel, swooning from loss of blood. In falling, his shield dropped into the water, and was seized by the Athenians, who introduced it into the trophy which they afterwards erected on the spot. The attack failed,

and was equally unsuccessful on the following day, though the attempt was renewed several times. In the meanwhile, the narrow channel running between the northern end of Sphacteria and the promontory of Pylus, and giving access to the bay, was left wholly unguarded, and in time an Athenian fleet appeared in sight. A long and obstinate engagement was fought next day, when the Spartans, in spite of the utmost courage, tenacity, and resolution, were entirely defeated. The little island of Sphacteria, in which the choicest part of the Lacedæmonian army had been established, was closely blockaded by the Athenian fleet; and so desperate did the case appear to the Spartan authorities that an armistice was obtained, with a view to the opening of negotiations at Athens. Envoys were accordingly sent there; but the demands of the Assembly, acting under the influence of Cleon, were so extravagant that the Peloponnesian representatives returned to Pylus in an Athenian vessel, and the war broke out afresh. The blockade of Sphacteria was as rigorously enforced as circumstances would permit; but supplies of provisions were from time to time conveyed to the occupying force by adventurous Helots, who risked the chances of capture by the enemy for the sake of manumission by their masters if they succeeded. The prospects of the Athenian enterprise began to look unfavourable, and a descent upon the island appeared the only alternative to complete failure.

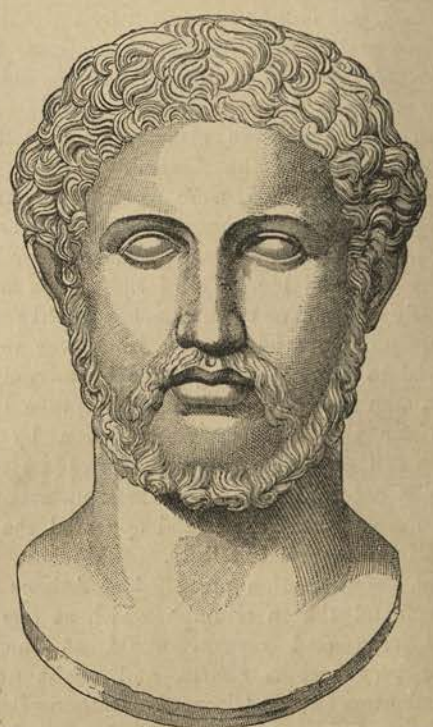
Great dissatisfaction prevailed at Athens when it was found that a triumph which at one time seemed easy and certain would at the best require very serious efforts, and might not be obtained even then. Cleon, the leather-seller, the most influential demagogue of the day, was loud in his condemnation of the generals and admirals in command of the national forces, to whose cowardice or stupidity he attributed all the difficulties of the situation. His opponent was Nicias, one of the ten Strategi—an honest and capable man, but without those brilliant and commanding talents which are necessary to the government of a people such as the ancient Athenians. It was one of the boasts of Cleon that if *he* were Strategus he would take Sphacteria at once, without demanding the heavy reinforcements which Demosthenes was now doing his utmost to procure. Nicias immediately offered to place troops at his command, and, the voice of the Assembly ratifying this proposal (which was probably made in the hope of silencing a noisy critic), Cleon, after some hesitation, accepted the post. Taking with him a number of Lemnian, Imbrian, and Thracian soldiers, who were to act in concert with the Athenians at Pylus, he promised to reduce Sphacteria within twenty days, and utterly to crush the Spartan power. It was the misfortune of Athens at this time to be dominated by men of the character of Cleon. The popular Assembly, as the reader is aware, was not a representative body, but a tumultuous gathering of all the free citizens, who wrangled together in the market-place. There was consequently no kind of selection, and a total absence of that responsibility which attaches to a deputy. Each man spoke, voted, and acted entirely according to his own ideas of what was right, and without any sense of control or supervision; and, as it was a necessity of the system that large numbers of people should be addressed in the open air, the loudest voice and the most violent manner were apt to prevail. It is impossible to conceive a method of government more calculated to promote demagoguism at the expense of democracy. The long ascendency of Pericles had only checked an evil which it did not attempt to cure.

It was a discredit to the Athenian State that such a man as Cleon should ever have been entrusted with so grave a mission as that on which he was despatched in 425 B.C. Yet the result proved fortunate, owing, however, to the fact that the actual direction of affairs still remained in the hands of Demosthenes, whom Cleon did little more than nominally supersede. By the time the latter arrived at Pylus, preparations for an attack had been completed, and these were followed by an accidental fire, which burned down the woods of Sphacteria wherein the Spartans had enshrouded themselves. The occupying force was extremely small, being not more than four hundred and twenty men; and these were now deprived of the cover on which they had hitherto relied. Still, Demosthenes considered it prudent to land as many as ten thousand of his own men, and to make arrangements for crushing and overwhelming an enemy whom he seems to have doubted his capacity to vanquish on anything like equal terms. Under the circumstances, the result was beyond a question. The Athenian commander and his forces landed, a little before daybreak, at both ends of the island. At the northern extremity, in addition to the difficult character of the rocks, the ground was obstructed by an ancient fort of stone; the southern extremity was held by a small advanced guard, which was speedily driven in; and the main body of the Peloponnesians, stationed about the centre of the island, then moved southwards to confront the chief division of the invaders. Their march was greatly incommoded by the stumps and

ashes of the burnt trees, and, as they proceeded, their ranks were galled by showers of darts poured into them from both sides, and from the rear, by bodies of light-armed troops stationed at various spots by Demosthenes. Finding the situation hopeless, and being nearly blinded by the dust and ashes beaten up by the trampling feet of the antagonists, Epitadas, the Lacedæmonian commander, directed his men to fall back upon the fort at the northern end of the island. The Pelo-



SOCRATES.
From the Bust in the Vatican.



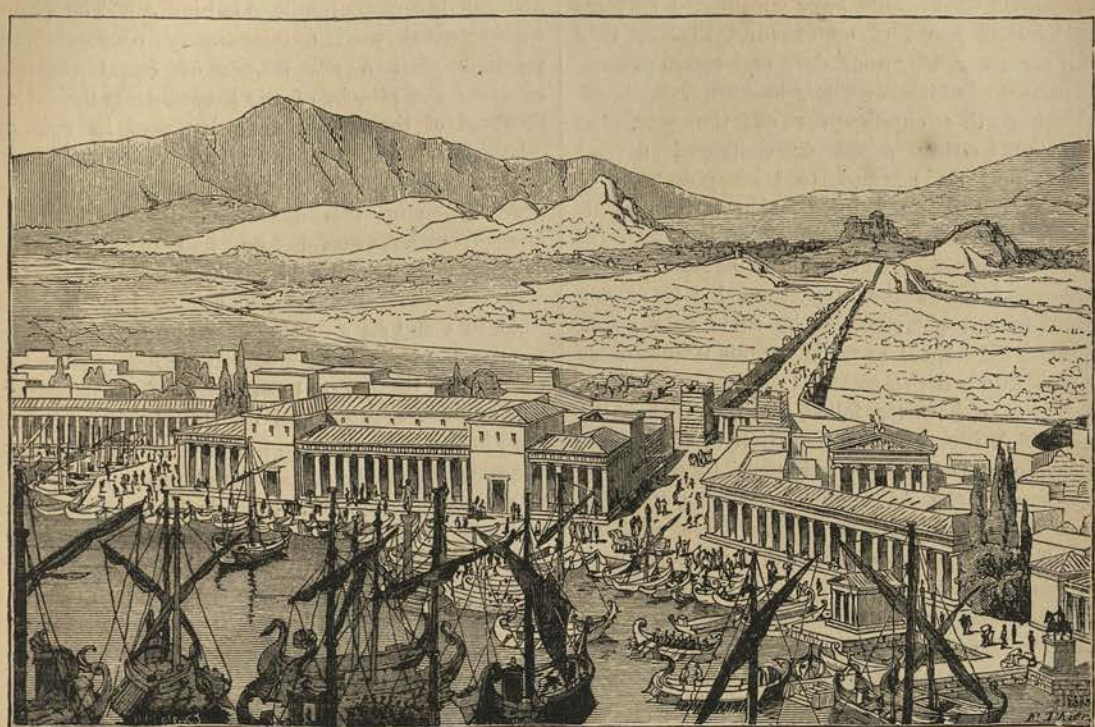
ALCIBIADES.
From the Bust in the Chiaramonti Museum at Rome.

ponnesians were by this time almost spent with heat and fatigue. Many were badly wounded through their armour; the orders of the captains were drowned in the continual shouts of the Athenians; the minds of the discomfited soldiers were confused by the reduplication of danger at every point; and nothing but flight remained open to them. The Athenians followed closely in their track, but the greater number arrived in good order within the enclosure of the circular stone walls.

Unequally matched as the combatants were, the struggle had nevertheless occupied the greater part of the day. With the protection of the ancient fort, rude as it was, the Peloponnesians were able to keep their opponents at bay; but, after a time, some Messenians belonging to the attacking force devised a scheme by which the position could be turned. Making their way round by the sea-shore, they clambered up a number of crags which had been regarded as insurmountable, and suddenly appeared on the high ground overhanging the rear of the little band. Cleon and Demosthenes, desiring rather to take the men prisoners than to kill them, summoned the body to surrender at discretion. The greater number lowered their shields and raised their arms, in token of compliance; and a conference was at once begun. The unfortunate Peloponnesians were indeed in a most lamentable plight. Epitadas was dead; the second in command was so badly wounded as to be insensible; and the negotiations were conducted with one Styphon, who was next in the order of succession. Styphon requested leave to communicate with his countrymen on the mainland, and, this being done, the surrender was completed. All hope of succour was at an end, and the Peloponnesians on the island were fully authorised by their more fortunate comrades to consult their own interests consistently with honour. This was certainly a departure from the old Lacedæmonian ideal of

military virtue, which forbade an army to surrender, however much it might be outnumbered, and which required that every soldier should die at his post, if he could not conquer. But the tendency of civilization is to soften these rigorous conceptions of duty, and it may have been thought that what was not permissible in a contest with Persians and other foreigners might be allowed where the antagonists themselves were Greeks. The total number who surrendered was two hundred and ninety-two. of whom about one hundred and twenty were Spartans belonging to the highest families. Cleon returned to Athens with his prisoners, having accomplished his feat within the period of twenty days which he had prescribed to himself. The chief merit of the victory was certainly due to the experience of Demosthenes; but it may be that the excessive caution of that general was stimulated by the ignorant daring and enterprise of Cleon. At any rate, the latter received much credit from the members of his own party, and his insolent self-confidence was aggravated by a triumph which he himself could hardly have expected. The Spartans were proportionately dejected by so grave a calamity, and sent repeated messages to Athens to propose a peace. It would have been well had the Athenians accepted these offers; but they were elated by their success, and perhaps considered that a further prosecution of the war might put into their hands the lordship of the whole of Greece.

Animated by the good fortune of their countrymen at Sphacteria, Eurymedon and Sophocles proceeded in the fleet to Corcyra, where they took Mount Istone by storm, and captured the oligarchs who had for some time maintained a military position there. Eurymedon assented to the condition on which they offered to surrender—viz., that they should be sent to Athens, to be judged by the Assembly; but he broke his promise, and, under the pretext that some of their number had made an attempt to escape, handed them over to the democratic party. All were soon afterwards slaughtered, with circumstances of great cruelty; and the Athenians under Eurymedon, so far from making any endeavour to save the wretched men from extermination, looked on with apparent satisfaction. About three hundred persons were thus slain; and, towards the close of the massacre, some of those who were confined in a large building committed suicide, rather than encounter the prolonged and elaborate tortures which their enemies designed to inflict on them. This terrible crime brought the campaign of 425 B.C. to a close. In the early part



THE PIRÆUS WITH THE LONG WALLS, RESTORED.

of 424, the successes of the Athenians continued without intermission, and it appeared as if the ultimate result of the struggle would be entirely favourable to the Attic Power. The Lacedæmonians felt alarmed for their safety, and, distrusting the miserable Helots whom they had oppressed for so many generations, treacherously slew them to the number of two thousand. These unhappy creatures were brought together under pretence of receiving their freedom; and when they appeared, crowned with garlands, and flattered with religious ceremonials which must have encouraged in them the liveliest hopes of approaching liberty, they were slaughtered by some dark and secret process, the nature of which is entirely unknown.

During this eighth year of the war, the Athenians either seized or destroyed several places; but an attempt to take possession of Megara was defeated by Brasidas. The event appears to have been a turning-point in the tide of Athenian success. An expedition against Bœotia, commenced about the same time, led to a very serious catastrophe. Aided by some native malcontents, the Athenians made various simultaneous attacks upon the Bœotian territory. Some of these attacks, however, failed, and that part of the plan which included an occupation of the temple of Apollo at Delium was only partially successful. Hippocrates, the Athenian commander, fortified the sanctuary, and left a garrison there, while he himself, and the rest of the army, marched back towards the Attic frontiers. Between Delium and Oropus, a body of Bœotians was encountered at Tanagra. The enemy was in great force, and, after some difference of opinion among the Bœotian commanders, it was determined to attack the retreating Athenians. The Athenian general saw that his ranks were about to be assailed, but does not seem to have anticipated that the onslaught would come so quickly. The Bœotians advanced secretly under cover of a steep hill, from which they suddenly burst upon the Athenians while Hippocrates was yet addressing his men, after having drawn them up in line of battle. The left wing of the Bœotians was temporarily driven back; but the Theban phalanx on the right wing swept through the entire mass of their opponents, and, when the Bœotian cavalry was brought up, the discomfiture of the Athenians was complete. Hippocrates himself was slain; a large number of his soldiers lay dead upon the field, and the remainder fled in various directions. On the following day, an Athenian herald asked permission to bury the fallen; but the Bœotians refused to allow the rites of sepulture until Delium was evacuated, and the violation of Apollo's sanctuary had been atoned for by expiatory observances. Delium was soon afterwards invested by the successful belligerents, and compelled to surrender, though the greater number of the garrison managed to escape by sea. The battle in the vicinity of Tanagra (which is called the battle of Delium) is particularly interesting, not only for its own sake, as one of the most important actions of the war, but also from the fact that among the Athenian combatants were the illustrious Socrates, and his favourite pupil, Alcibiades. The philosopher acted with extraordinary courage, and, together with a few others of equal bravery, repulsed the attacks of the Bœotian cavalry when the rest of the Athenian army was in retreat. Alcibiades, who, whatever his vices, was undoubtedly attached to his master, helped to protect him on this disastrous day, as Socrates himself, eight years before, had saved the life of Alcibiades when badly wounded at the siege of Potidæa. The Bœotians had now proved their right to stand on a footing of equality with other members of the Greek race. Their heavy phalanx, twenty-five deep, had been most effective against the slighter organization of the Athenians, and the Theban corps of three hundred chosen warriors, afterwards remodelled as the Sacred Band, had won the highest distinction to which soldiers can aspire. By the more quick-witted Athenians, the Bœotians were generally accused of dulness; but they were yet to perform a great part in Grecian history, and their very solidity was an element possessing peculiar value in the midst of populations such as those with which Hellenic history had hitherto been principally concerned.

Thrace now began to rebel against the Athenian supremacy. The Lacedæmonian general, Brasidas, led an army of various composition into that northern land, and effected a junction with a Macedonian force under Perdiccas. The allies found considerable support among the people, who had always fretted under the Athenian yoke. Two of the chief cities received the invaders with open arms, and in the winter of 424 B.C. Brasidas, who had been moving rapidly by forced marches, and who exhibited throughout the campaign some of the most masterly qualities of a general, unexpectedly appeared before the colony of Amphipolis, near the mouth of the river Strymon. The Athenian party in that city sent for assistance to Thucydides, the historian, who was then commanding at Thasos. Thucydides left that island with seven ships, but Amphipolis had surrendered before he could arrive there. He was afterwards,

on the motion of Cleon, sentenced to banishment for having failed in vigilance, and the next twenty years of his life were spent in exile. Most of the Greek cities on the peninsulas of Chalcidice fell shortly afterwards into the hands of Brasidas, and at Torone, which was carried by storm, all the prisoners were massacred, in obedience to that spirit of unrestrained ferocity which had taken possession of all the combatants. The Athenians had in fact done very little to protect their distant colonies, and were by this time so much out of heart as to be eager for that peace which a year before they had rejected. The Spartans, notwithstanding their late successes, were equally desirous of bringing the war to a close; and early in 423 B.C. a truce was concluded for a year. This truce was observed both in Attica and the Peloponnesus; but an unfortunate event in the north led to a prolongation of hostilities in that quarter. The town of Scione, in the peninsula of Pallene—the most westerly of those connected with Chalcidice—suddenly revolted to Brasidas; and as this took place two days after the conclusion of the truce, one of the conditions of which was that everything should remain as it stood until peace was finally concluded, the Athenians not unreasonably required the restitution of the town. Brasidas refused, and the Athenians sent an armament against Scione. The Macedonian king, Perdiccas, had now treacherously deserted Brasidas, who, doubting his ability to hold Scione, threw himself into Torone, as a place of greater strength.

The population of Athens was divided into a peace-party and a war-party. The soul of the latter was Cleon, and by his vehemence and resolution he managed to impose his ideas on the majority. In 422 B.C.—by which date the truce had expired—it was determined to send out an expedition for the recovery of Amphipolis, and Cleon himself was appointed to command the forces. He began his operations by re-taking Torone, in the absence of Brasidas; then, sailing to Eïon, he awaited reinforcements from Macedonia and Thrace. Galepsus, another town in the same locality, was also seized by Cleon, but an attempt to reduce Stagirus was attended by failure. This reverse appears to have daunted the spirits of the demagogue, and he remained inactive until the murmurs of his troops compelled him to undertake some fresh adventure. He then sailed up the Strymon, and reconnoitred Amphipolis from the high ground in its vicinity. Brasidas, who was now encamped within the city, so disposed his troops that to the inexperienced eyes of Cleon it appeared as if the town were almost deserted. So false a confidence took possession of him that he allowed his men to lose their military order and formation, and was thus at a terrible disadvantage when he heard that Brasidas was preparing to sally forth. Conscious of his entire inability to meet such an attack, Cleon at once ordered a retreat, and Brasidas, looking over the city wall, saw that the forces of his opponent were utterly disorganized. Their march was loose, straggling, and slovenly; their heads drooped like men dispirited; the very way in which they carried their weapons showed how unlikely they were to withstand the shock of a sudden assault. The retreating masses were accordingly pursued, and, at the first contact with the enemy, gave way on the left flank and centre. A feeling of panic fell upon Cleon, and he fled with all speed, without waiting to see whether his line of battle could be restored. Being hotly chased by a Thracian, he was presently killed; but his right wing made a courageous stand until scattered by a charge of cavalry. This victory conferred the greatest credit upon Brasidas; but in the course of the fighting he received a wound, of which he died soon after. His abilities as a general were much superior to those of his contemporaries, and he revived in his own person and character some of the most marked traditions of the Spartan nationality.

The death of Brasidas and of Cleon removed two of the greatest obstacles to the conclusion of peace, and renewed negotiations for a settlement were commenced in the ensuing winter. These were conducted, on the part of Athens, by Nicias, the head of the peace-party, and, on the side of the Peloponnesians, by the Spartan king, Pleistoanax. They resulted in the conclusion of a Fifty Years' Truce (otherwise called the Peace of Nicias), on the basis of a mutual restitution of prisoners and places captured during the war. Thus were hostilities brought to a close in the spring of 421 B.C., after about ten years of fruitless struggles, which had inflicted enormous injury on Greece, and created a feeling of mutual distrust and resentment among those who should have been brethren. It was now agreed that all neutral towns were to remain independent; that the Thebans were to retain Platæa, because it had been voluntarily surrendered; and that for the same reason Athens was still to hold Nisæa, Anactorium, and Sollium. In some respects it was found impossible to carry out the terms of this treaty, by which the interests of the smaller States were undoubtedly sacrificed to those of Sparta and Athens. The chief allies of the former—the Corinthians, Eleans, Megarians, and Bœotians—

refused to ratify the truce, and Sparta, alarmed at the turn affairs had taken, concluded an offensive and defensive alliance with Athens, on the understanding that each party should be free to increase or diminish the number of its allies and subjects. One form of antagonism, however, was speedily substituted for another. The Corinthians, dissatisfied with the results of the war, proposed the formation of a new Confederacy, to include the whole of Greece, with the exception of Athens and Sparta, and to be headed by Argos, whose ancient pretensions to be considered the leader of Hellas were thus arbitrarily revived. The scheme was not very vigorously supported, and in some quarters met with positive opposition; so that to all watchful observers it appeared extremely doubtful whether the state of war would not break forth again with redoubled violence. Amphipolis, on the Strymon, should have been surrendered to Athens; but the inhabitants exhibited so strong a feeling against this measure that the Spartan commander on the spot declared his inability to carry out the treaty stipulation. Scione, which in 423 B.C. had revolted to the Spartans, was now reconquered by the Athenians, when a decree of Cleon, sanctioned at the time of the revolt, and ordering that every man in the place should be put to death, was remorselessly carried out. Pylus should have been relinquished by Athens; but she refused to give up the place, and contented herself with removing the Messenians and Helots who had settled within its walls.

Athens was now falling under the influence of a very remarkable man, whose figure is one of the most conspicuous and characteristic in the annals of that commonwealth. At the conclusion of the Fifty Years' Truce, Alcibiades was nearly thirty years of age, and had already attracted to himself considerable attention, though not generally of the most creditable kind. Nevertheless, he was a favourite with the people, as men of high birth, attractive presence, elegant manners, and bright audacity, are almost certain to be. On his father's side he claimed to be descended from the old hero Æacus, a reputed son of Jupiter by Ægina, the daughter of Asopus, himself a person of very mythological origin. The mother of Alcibiades was connected with the aristocratical house of the Alcmæonidæ, so that the son was related to Pericles, who, on the death of Clinias, the father of Alcibiades, acted as the youth's guardian. With no character of the ancient world do we seem better acquainted than with Alcibiades. His relations with Socrates; his wayward devotion to philosophy, mingled with the wildest dissipation; the beauty of his person in youth; his love of argument, his fits of passion, his courage and skill in manly exercises, his inordinate vanity, his riotous indulgences, his insolence towards all whom he disliked, his defiance of the magistrates, his immunity from punishment when he broke the law, his profuse expenditure, the singular way in which he at once attracted and repelled all those with whom he came in contact,—these things are as familiar to us as though Alcibiades were a man of the last century, or the last generation. We hear the very lisp in his speech, and are led to speculate whether it was an affectation, or the result (as Plutarch affirms) of a too great fatness of the tongue. Alcibiades had gained the warm regards of Socrates; but the philosopher could not fail to observe how uncertain and fickle was the disposition of this gifted youth. That the latter derived some good impressions from the teaching of his master, can hardly be doubted; but it is to be feared that they were to a great extent obliterated by the inferior, yet stronger, elements of his nature. He had a true affection for Socrates, but was always at the mercy of any wild impulse which happened to take possession of him; and it is impossible to conceive a character more opposed than his to that of the high-souled philosopher who made the repression of irregular desires one of the main objects of his life. As he grew older, Alcibiades forsook the companionship of his sage preceptor, and Socrates must have beheld with sorrow that his care had been lavished in vain upon a young man whose moods inclined him fifty times to evil where they inclined him once to good.

Owing to the previous death of his father, Alcibiades was enabled to enter into possession of the family estate at the early age of eighteen. His property was large, and he was in a position to live with the profusion which was dear to his vanity, to his love of magnificence, and to his taste for unrestrained adventure. We have seen that he served in the army, and served with distinction; but all his strongest inclinations were towards that brilliant Athenian life which was partly political, partly artistic, and partly licentious. Admirers crowded about him, and no one was ever exposed to worse influences, or was ever more ready to welcome them as the chief boons of existence. Yet Alcibiades never sacrificed his ambition to his enjoyments. If he had learned nothing else from Socrates, he had learned that perilous art of dialectics which the philosopher himself never used but as a means of advancing what he believed to be the truth, but which in less scrupulous hands might be turned to the worst purposes of political

dishonesty. A power of ready speech was one of the most necessary qualifications in an Athenian, and Alcibiades laboured hard to acquire the arts of an orator. His fastidious tastes stood somewhat in his way in this respect; for where a man of coarser perceptions would have poured forth the first words that occurred to him, Alcibiades hesitated, faltered, and recommenced his sentences. As long as Cleon was the master-spirit of the Assembly, Alcibiades remained in the shade; but, in later years, his oratory, becoming more matured and self-confident, was distinguished by qualities which Cornelius Nepos (repeating, of course, the testimony of earlier writers) describes as irresistible. His entry into public life dates from the year 421 B.C., when he took an active part in the negotiations which resulted in the Peace of Nicias. His sympathies at first were somewhat on the Spartan side, and he showed a good deal of solicitude for the Lacedæmonian prisoners then at Athens. But the Spartan authorities appear to have treated his friendship with disdain, and Alcibiades, with the passionate wilfulness of his nature, at once turned against them. He proposed that Athens should conclude a league with Argos, and a joint embassy was sent from that city, from Elis, and from Mantinea. Alarmed at this movement, the Spartans despatched envoys to Athens to explain their alleged breaches of the truce, and to demand the restoration of Pylus. These representatives declared to the Senate that they had come armed with full powers; but Alcibiades cunningly induced them to retract the statement, and to affirm that their powers went no farther than discussion. This course they were persuaded to follow by the representations of Alcibiades that in no other way could they disarm the hostility of Athens. He knew that the real effect would be precisely the contrary; and such was in fact the case. The Senate rang with indignation, and Alcibiades proposed that a treaty should be immediately concluded with the Argive ambassadors, together with Elis and Mantinea. This was done in 420 B.C., and the duration of the alliance was fixed at a hundred years.

In the summer of the same year, the Olympic Games were to be celebrated at Elis, in accordance with the usual custom. The state of war had, on the occasion of the two previous celebrations, prevented the Athenians from being present, and it was hoped by their recent enemies that the impoverishment of the State would compel the representatives of Athens to make a somewhat mean appearance. This would probably have been the case, had not Alcibiades stepped in with his personal wealth, and fitted out the sacred embassy with a splendour surpassing anything that had been known before. Alcibiades himself was present, taking with him several golden sacrificing vessels, and other magnificent appointments. Seven four-horsed chariots were entered by him for the great race, and the sumptuous Athenian, having carried off the first and second prizes, was twice crowned with the sacred olive. In acting after this fashion, Alcibiades was at once gratifying his own love of display, and producing an effect which was calculated to advance the interests of Athens. In 419 B.C., he was appointed one of the ten Strategi for the year, and in that capacity led a small force into the Peloponnesus, where, without violating the territory of Sparta, he actively promoted his schemes against that State by strengthening the alliance of Athens with the new Confederacy. The Argives were assisted in an attack upon Epidaurus, a city which interposed between Argos and the Saronic Gulf, and therefore hindered intercommunication between the Argive and Athenian Republics. This roused the jealousy and the apprehensions of Sparta, which, towards the latter end of 419 B.C., sent a force to the assistance of the Epidaurians. A Lacedæmonian invasion of Argos, on a very large scale, followed in 418 B.C. The Argives, struck with terror, concluded a hasty truce for four months, but broke it on the persuasion of Alcibiades. With their allies, they succeeded in taking Orchomenos; but the Spartan king, Agis, entered the territory of Mantinea with a great force, and took up a position near the temple of Hercules. After some marching and countermarching, which showed considerable hesitation in the mind of Agis, a furious battle occurred between the opposing lines, when the coolness and steady discipline of the highly-drilled Spartans inflicted an overwhelming defeat upon the Confederates. Argos now signed a treaty with Sparta, and a revolution in the former city gave power for a little while to the oligarchy, whose inclination was towards the Lacedæmonian alliance. This was followed by a counter-revolution, which, in 417 B.C., again set the democratical party at the head of affairs, and led to a renewal of the good understanding with Athens. Alcibiades was at Argos in the spring of 416 B.C., with a fleet of twenty triremes; and the Fifty Years' Truce was practically at an end, although nominally it still continued.

The attention of the Athenians was now directed towards the island of Melos, which, together with Thera, had always defied the Athenian supremacy. It was determined to reduce this small territory, and a squadron of thirty Athenian galleys, with

six Chian and two Lesbian vessels, having on board 1,200 Athenians and 1,500 allied troops, together with 320 archers, sailed for the little island, which had given occasion of offence by its friendly inclinations towards Sparta. Having landed their forces, the Athenian commanders sent an embassy to the chief city, in the hope of inducing the Melians to submit. The island had originally been colonised from Lacedæmon, and the people relied upon their fidelity to the parent State, during a period of seven hundred years, as establishing a claim on their part to the assistance which they now so sorely needed. No such help, however, was forthcoming, and the Athenians, having threatened dreadful consequences in the event of continued resistance, blockaded the capital by sea and land. The siege extended over some months; but Melos was at length obliged to submit, after a gallant defence, in which they twice succeeded in surprising a part of the Athenian lines. A reinforcement from Athens arrived towards the end of 416 B.C., and symptoms of disaffection among the citizens, in combination with the miseries of a blockade, necessitated the surrender of the town, which, without seeking to make any conditions, threw itself on the mercy of the conqueror. It is sickening to be compelled to add that all the adult males were put to death, and that the women and children were sold into slavery; after which, the island was re-colonized by five hundred Athenians. This punishment seems to have been deliberately arranged before the outset of the expedition, in case the Melians should fight for their independence; and Alcibiades is strongly suspected of having proposed the iniquity. Judgment, however, is never wanting for such crimes; and this crowning act of Athenian despotism marks the limit of Athenian fortune. Alcibiades was about to take part in an expedition which was fruitful in disastrous results, both for himself, and for the State to which he was at once an ornament and a curse.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE SICILIAN EXPEDITION.

State of Affairs in Sicily—Revolutionary Disturbances at Syracuse—Petalism—Rising of the Siculi under Ducetius—The Movement Suppressed—Supremacy of Syracuse over the other Greek Colonies of Sicily—Division among the Sicilian Communities at the Period of the Peloponnesian War—Athenian Intervention in Sicilian Affairs—Equipment of a Large Fleet in Aid of Egesta—Mutilation of the Hermæ at Athens—Accusations against Alcibiades—Sailing of the Sicilian Expedition—Alcibiades Ordered Back to Athens, to Answer the Charge of Profaning the Mysteries—He Escapes to Sparta—Entry of the Athenians under Nicias into the Great Harbour of Syracuse—Arrival of a Spartan Force in Aid of the Syracusans—Progress of the Siege—Critical Position of Nicias—Establishment of a Lacedæmonian Post in Attica—Defeat of the Athenian Navy at Syracuse—Arrival of Reinforcements—Preparations for Withdrawing the Army—Great Naval Battle in the Harbour of Syracuse, and Crushing Reverse of the Athenians—Disastrous Retreat and Pursuit—Final Defeat and Surrender of the Invading Army—Cruel Treatment of the Vanquished—Revolt of the Islands subject to Athens—Intrigues of the Spartans with Persia—Progress of the War—Conspiracy of Alcibiades with the Aristocratical Party at Athens—Overthrow of the Democratic Constitution, and Establishment of the Council of Four Hundred.

So prolonged and envenomed a struggle as that in which Athens and Sparta were still involved (for the Fifty Years' Truce was broken in many ways and in several directions) could hardly fail to draw into its destructive sweep the outlying communities of Greek origin which were scattered over various parts of Europe and Asia. In some instances we have seen that this was already the case; but the Sicilian and Italian colonies have not yet come into the field of vision, so far as the Peloponnesian War is concerned. Nevertheless, those colonies had from an early period taken sides in the great feud, though for some years nothing of importance occurred. With one exception, the Dorian commonwealths of Sicily espoused the cause of Sparta and her allies, as being that of the parent race; and the Locrians of Southern Italy joined the same league, at the head of which was Syracuse. Opposed to these allies were the Sicilian colonies of Leontini and Camarina, and the city of Rhegium, on the Italian mainland. But, in order to understand correctly the position of affairs in that part of the Hellenic world, it will be necessary to glance back at the progress of events since the battle of Himera.

It has been related that Gelo, the martial tyrant of Syracuse, died two years after the great defeat of the Carthaginians on the northern coast of Sicily, in 480 B.C., and that the brilliant but vicious reign of his brother Hiero created in the people

THE NAVAL BATTLE IN THE HARBOUR OF SYRACUSE.

so deep a hatred of despotism that in 465 B.C., under the reign of Thrasybulus, a popular revolution put an end to personal rule, not only at Syracuse, but in other Sicilian cities. A period of great disturbance followed, especially at Syracuse; for the foreign mercenaries incorporated by Gelo, to the number of 10,000 and upwards, of whom more than 7,000 were still enjoying the franchise, refused to surrender their privileges without an effort to preserve them. When, therefore, a measure was passed for disfranchising the whole body, these soldiers of fortune seized two quarters of the city which appear to have been particularly favourable to their sedition, and there defended themselves with so much courage and resolution that their opponents were driven back again and again. The Syracusans accordingly determined to blockade them in their stronghold; and when, pressed by hunger, they sallied forth, a crushing defeat was inflicted on them outside the city walls. Similar reverses fell on other bodies of alien troops in various parts of Hellenic Sicily; and, the foreigners being now completely worsted, it was determined to settle them partly in the vicinity of Messana, at the extreme north-east of the island, and partly at Camarina, near Syracuse.

The convulsions of the time enabled the Siculi, or descendants of the earlier inhabitants, to recover certain territories which Hiero had taken from them, and annexed to his colony at Ætna, as he called the former city of Catana, on the eastern coast. At that period, most of the Siculi acknowledged the sovereignty of a chief named Ducetius, who, leading his forces against the colonists at Ætna, defeated them in several engagements. The old name of the town was then restored, and the colonists, taking possession of a city in the interior, called Inessa, gave to it the name of Ætna, about 458 B.C. Political commotions still troubled the tranquillity of Syracuse, and, to guard against the designs of ambitious men, a proceeding analogous to the Athenian ostracism was introduced under the title of *petalism*, the names of the unpopular citizens being written on olive-leaves. So many eminent persons were thus sent into exile that, according to Diodorus Siculus, a general terror seized the leading men, who, withdrawing from public life, left the conduct of affairs in the basest hands. The condition of the State was therefore worse than before, and the institution of petalism was soon abolished. Notwithstanding these frequent changes, Syracuse remained a flourishing and powerful city, and the piracies of the Tuscans were effectually checked.

The history of Sicily at this time is not merely the history of the Greek colonies established at various points along the coast. Under the energetic rule of Ducetius, the earlier populations of the island—the true Sicilians—were assuming a position of importance. Desiring to give special lustre to his power, which he seems to have considered might in time spread over the whole of Sicily, Ducetius founded two new cities: one called Menænus, after Menæ, his native place; the other named Palice, from its being erected near the sanctuary of two deities, one of whom was Pales, the goddess of shepherds. Pales was not a Greek divinity, but was worshipped with great solemnity at Rome, for both the Italians and the Sicilians were pastoral people. The sanctuary of Pales in Sicily was distinguished by two sulphureous springs, to which a supernatural character was attached. Fugitives sought the spot as an inviolable place of refuge, and oaths taken within its boundary were invested with a peculiar awfulness. In the vicinity of this sacred ground, Ducetius enclosed a large space, which was soon peopled by citizens from Menæ and other towns; and the Sicilian chief, encouraged by his success, began a series of operations against the Greeks. He recovered the ancient Inessa from its Hellenic colonists, about 452 B.C., and then seized on Motyum, a fortress belonging to the Agrigentines. In the following year, however, he was vanquished by the Syracusans, and, finding himself deserted by his former adherents, entered Syracuse in the dead of night, and in the morning was discovered in the posture of a suppliant on one of the altars in the market-place. His life being spared, he was sent to Corinth, with orders to remain there for the rest of his days; but five years later—in 446 B.C.—he reappeared in Sicily with a numerous band of supporters, and proceeded to found a city on the north coast. The new movement of Ducetius led to a war between Syracuse and Agrigentum, the latter complaining of the imprudent lenity which had spared the life of this daring warrior. The result of the contest was that the Agrigentines were so utterly defeated as to be compelled to obtain peace at the cost of acknowledging the supremacy of Syracuse, which was extended over all the Dorian communities of Sicily, with the exception of Camarina. Ducetius died in 440 B.C., and the towns of the Siculi were then rapidly conquered and destroyed.

Thus, at the commencement of the Peloponnesian War, the original populations of Sicily were subjugated by the several Greek colonies, and the latter, being delivered from all fear of domestic rivals, were free to give their attention to the grand quarrel which was dividing the larger part

of the Hellenic world into two hostile camps. Syracuse, as a settlement of Corinth, threw in her lot with the Peloponnesians, and was joined by the other Dorian cities, with the exception of Camarina. The cities of Chalcidian origin, the people of which belonged remotely to the Ionian race, disliked the predominance of the Doric Syracusans, and looked to Athens as their natural ally. Still, however strong may have been the sense of jealousy and mutual distrust, peace was preserved among the several colonies of Sicily until the fourth year of the Peloponnesian struggle (428 B.C.), when war broke out between Syracuse and Leontini. The Leontines were of Ionian stock; but, beyond the antagonism of race, the cause of quarrel between their commonwealth and that of Syracuse is unknown. That these feelings of animosity should have been perpetuated among the descendants of analogous tribes so long after they had formed in some respects a common nationality, may seem as strange as if Englishmen, not many generations ago, had been at deadly strife with one another because some were descended from Saxons, some from Angles, and some from Jutes. But it must be recollected that the Greeks never had the advantage of a single government, and that the tendency of all their institutions was to foster the spirit of local self-esteem at the cost of a larger patriotism.

In their contest with Syracuse, the Leontines were assisted by the people of Camarina, who, for some reason not very apparent, opposed their fellow-Dorians. Notwithstanding this support, the citizens of Leontini found the Syracusan Confederacy so much the stronger that, being blockaded both by sea and land, they applied to Athens for succour in 427 B.C. The embassy was conducted by Gorgias, a rhetorician and philosopher of such brilliant powers that his advocacy of any cause was generally attended by success. Gorgias became very popular at Athens, where his style of eloquence captivated the younger generation, and he obtained high prices for his teaching. His political mission secured the results which were desired. The Athenians despatched a squadron of twenty ships to the coasts of Sicily, and instructed the commanders to ascertain whether it would be possible to reduce the whole island, the size of which they believed to be much less than it really is. Another expedition followed in 425 B.C.; but, as little or nothing had been effected on the first occasion, and as the selfish designs of Athens were now apparent, the Sicilian colonies determined to forget their differences, and unite against the threatened danger. The consequence was that the Athenian commanders, Eurymedon, Sophocles, and Pythodorus, thought it prudent to conclude a hasty peace with the Sicilian Greeks—an act which excited so much indignation at home that, on their return, they were indicted for having accepted bribes for a cessation of hostilities. A conviction being obtained, Eurymedon was sentenced to pay a fine, and the others were banished.

Athenian intervention in the affairs of Sicily was renewed in 416 B.C. In that year, the people of Egesta, a city near the western extremity of the island, applied to the Athenians for assistance against the rival town of Selinus, with which they were at feud. Alcibiades was strongly in favour of granting this request, but was opposed by Nicias and his party, who so far prevailed as to delay the despatch of any expedition until it had been ascertained whether the Egestæans were really able to provide funds for the war, as they had promised to do. Commissioners were sent to Egesta, and were dazzled by the extraordinary appearances of wealth which they beheld in the temples, and at the numerous feasts to which they were invited. Much of this appearance was delusive; for vessels which seemed to be of solid gold were in reality nothing but gilded silver, and the plate in private houses was cleverly shifted about from one to another, so as to deceive the Athenian visitors. The commissioners returned to their own city with sixty talents of silver as an earnest of what was to follow, and with the most flattering assurances of the opulence of Egesta. The war-party was thus strengthened in its demands, and a fleet of a hundred triremes was fitted out under the command of Nicias, Alcibiades, and Lamachus. The appointment of Nicias as the chief admiral was singular, because he had all along opposed the enterprise, and still denounced it as an error fraught with peril. But nothing could exceed the popularity of the expedition, and for three months every nerve was strained to render the fleet efficient in all respects. Shortly before the day for starting, however, a very untoward incident occurred. On rising one morning, the Athenians discovered that all the Hermæ, or busts of the god Hermes (Mercury), which stood, mounted on pillars of marble, at the corners of streets, before the temples, and in other public places, had been so mutilated during the night as to be little better than masses of battered stone. The circumstance not unnaturally excited a feeling of the most extreme horror and dread; for, in the opinion of the religious (who were undoubtedly the great majority of the population), an act of awful sacrilege had been committed, and it was believed

that divine vengeance would assuredly follow on such a crime.

Not merely on religious grounds, however, did the Athenians view the mutilation of the Hermæ with consternation. So far-spread an outrage must have been the work of many hands, and it therefore seemed probable that a strong faction existed in the city, with designs inimical to the existing order. It was feared that some one contemplated seizing on supreme power, and establishing a tyranny similar to that of the Pisistratidæ. Suspicion pointed to Alcibiades as the chief offender, and a public board was appointed to examine witnesses. The ambitious, reckless, and domineering character of this remarkable man gave some colour to the charge; but Alcibiades must have known that such an act would be regarded as a bad omen for the approaching war, and would certainly not have done anything to injure the chances of an expedition which he, more than any one else, had promoted. It is true that he was a scoffer at religion, and, on former occasions, had in his drunken fits committed acts of impiety similar to those which were now creating such general dismay. But as a man of the world he must have known that the effect of such an outrage at such a time would be most depressing to the national spirit. If mere suspicion is to be held of any value, it would seem more reasonable to suppose that Nicias had contrived the act, as a means of damaging an enterprise which he viewed with the utmost disfavour. Alcibiades, however, found an accuser in one Pythonicus, who charged him in the Assembly with profaning the Eleusinian Mysteries by giving a representation of them in a private house, and with being concerned in the mutilation of the Hermæ. The first of these accusations was supported only by the evidence of a slave; the second was not supported at all. Much against the wish of Alcibiades, investigation was postponed until after the return of the fleet; and the ships sailed from the Piræus under a general sense of gloom and evil foreboding, which a splendid and imposing religious ceremonial on board did nothing to relieve.

The expedition started from Athens in the summer of 415 B.C., and was joined at Corcyra by the other contingents in the course of July. Sailing thence to Magna Græcia, the naval commanders found to their disappointment that the Hellenic cities of Southern Italy were not at all well inclined to the project. A still further mortification awaited them at Rhegium, where they received news of the inability of the Egestæans to perform their promises. It was now, however, too late to draw back, and indeed the succour of Egesta was not the only object of the war. The democratic party at Leontini had been expelled by the aristocrats, and it was the policy of Athens to restore the former, and at the same time to conquer all the Dorian States of Sicily. Lamachus advised an immediate attack on Syracuse, which was known to be in a state of very imperfect defence; but his recommendations were not adopted. An attempt was made to unite the other Sicilian cities in a league against Syracuse and Selinus; but all except Naxos hung back from joining the Athenians. The city of Catana, near the foot of Mount Ætna, was taken by a surprise, and became the head-quarters of the invasion. But the expedition languished, and, after a while, Alcibiades was ordered back to Athens, to answer the charge of profaning the Eleusinian Mysteries. The accusation against him with respect to the Hermæ had by this time been abandoned; for the offer of large rewards had brought forth a mass of evidence implicating a young man of great ability, but bad reputation, named Andocides, who, having been arrested, made a variety of disclosures affecting several persons, but not Alcibiades. The persons denounced by Andocides were executed, and, although his own life was spared, in consideration of his having turned informer, the exasperation of the people was so great that he was compelled to fly from Athens. Whether his statements were true or false, it is impossible to say. The affair of the Hermæ must for ever remain a mystery; but, for the reasons already given, it is extremely improbable that Alcibiades had anything to do with it.

The charge of profaning the Mysteries, however, had a greater appearance of truthfulness, and it was to answer this imputation that Alcibiades was summoned back to Athens. The citizens were in a state of painful excitement as to this alleged impiety. It was believed that some terrible evil would ensue unless justice were done on the offender, and the appearance of a Spartan force upon the frontiers intensified the general uneasiness. On this account, the presence of Alcibiades was required by all parties alike; but, in consideration of his high repute, and of the fact that he was as yet only in the position of a person accused, the commander of the State galley which conveyed the mandate was instructed not to seize his person, but to allow him, if he pleased, to sail in his own trireme. On arriving at Thurii, in Italy, Alcibiades managed to escape, and was condemned to death in his absence, with the confiscation of all his property. Hearing of his sentence, he observed,

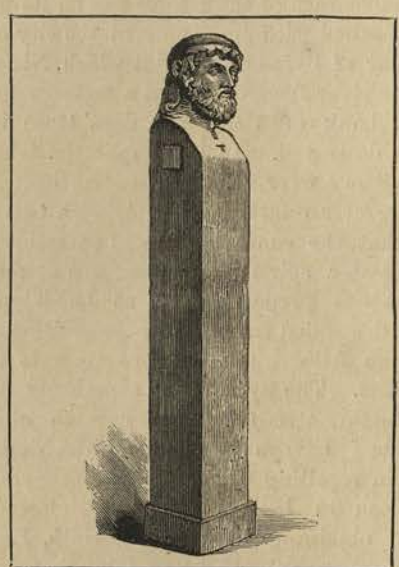
"I will show them that I am still alive;" and, proceeding shortly afterwards to Sparta, he revealed to the ruling authorities there all the plans of Athens, and exhorted them to send an army into Sicily, as well as to establish a fortified post within the territory of Attica itself.

After the departure of Alcibiades, the Sicilian expedition fell mainly into the hands of Nicias, who, actuated by his intense dislike of the whole project, did nothing to advance the Athenian cause until the Syracusans, having greatly improved the defences of their city, and gained courage from the apathy of their foe, attacked him in his head-quarters at Catana. Taking advantage of the absence of so large a force, Nicias sailed with his whole fleet into the Great Harbour of Syracuse, and, landing near the mouth of the river Anapus, entrenched himself on the right bank of that stream, the bridge over which he destroyed. In this position he gained a signal victory over the Syracusans, and then retired into winter quarters at Naxos. It was now evident that the contest would be renewed with much greater spirit in the following spring, and both parties prepared to meet the issue. Nicias urgently demanded fresh supplies of cavalry and money from Athens, and reinforcements from his Sicilian allies. The Syracusans, on the other hand, still further strengthened their defences, and despatched envoys to Corinth and Sparta for assistance in repelling the attack which they had good reason to believe would not be long delayed. On obtaining the succours that he needed, Nicias re-opened the campaign in 414 B.C., and made arrangements for besieging Syracuse. The point from which the city was most exposed to attack was the high ground of Epipolæ, to the north-west of the town. This position was seized by Nicias, who marched up to the spot just as the Syracusans were moving in the same direction. The latter made an attempt to dislodge the enemy, but were repulsed, and the Athenians then constructed elaborate lines of circumvallation, which the Syracusans opposed by counter-works. Lamachus, a man of great daring and energy, was killed in one of the early attacks on the Syracusan outposts, and the conduct of the siege then lay wholly in the hands of Nicias, who proceeded with the deliberation that was characteristic of his generalship. The circumvallation, which consisted of two parallel walls, with a space between them, was never completed towards the north; and the Syracusans were enabled to obtain provisions through the opening thus left by the carelessness or inattention of Nicias.

The Spartans, having accepted the advice of Alcibiades, despatched a force under the command of Gylippus, with instructions to protect the Greek cities in Southern Italy. A violent storm drove the fleet into Tarentum, where Gylippus learned that the Athenian circumvallation at Syracuse was still incomplete upon the northern side. He therefore sailed through the Straits of Messana, and, arriving at Himera, levied an army with extraordinary despatch, and marched towards Syracuse at the head of about 3,000 men. The Syracusans, who shortly before had been so depressed in spirits as to make proposals of surrender, immediately recovered heart on hearing that a Lacedæmonian force was on its way to their assistance. Gylippus entered the city over the heights of Epipolæ, at a point which Nicias had left unguarded. He then sent a message to the Athenians, granting them a five days' truce in which to gather their effects, and quit the island. Opposed though he was to the expedition, Nicias was of course unable to comply with this offer, and Gylippus at once commenced operations which showed that the time for trifling was at an end. He captured an Athenian fort at Labdalum, and thus obtained a mastery over the position at Epipolæ. Counter-works on a large scale were then executed without delay, and the superiority of the besieged and their allies was now so unmistakable that various Sicilian communities declared their readiness to support the cause of Syracuse. Shortly afterwards, Gylippus was reinforced by the arrival of thirty triremes from Corinth, Leucas, and Ambracia; and Nicias, perceiving that his forces were unequal to the continued blockade of Syracuse, removed his camp to the headland of Plemmyrium, on the southern side of the Great Harbour. At this point he erected three forts, and formed a naval station; but he was in truth reduced to the position of one assailed, and could no longer be regarded as occupying the offensive. His vessels became leaky, and the confidence of his men was so seriously impaired that desertions became numerous, both from the army and the navy. The unfortunate commander sent off urgent appeals for reinforcements, and begged that he might be relieved from further responsibility, for which the broken state of his health entirely unfitted him. A fresh expedition was despatched under Demosthenes and Eurymedon; but the Athenians refused to recall Nicias, who was consequently obliged to remain in a position which he detested, and for which he seems to have had but few qualifications.

The Fifty Years' Truce, which had been indirectly violated for a long time past, was now so unequivocally at an end that the Spartans considered

themselves free to make another inroad into Attica, which they did in the spring of 413 B.C., under their king, Agis. Following out one of the suggestions of Alcibiades, they established a fortified station at Decelea, a village on the ridge of Mount Parnes, some fourteen miles to the north of Athens. This was a very serious fact for the Athenians, as the position enabled the intruders to ravage the plain of Attica at their will, and also afforded a refuge for fugitive slaves. The failure of supplies thus occasioned was seriously felt ere long within the city; yet the Athenians did not lose heart, but, on the contrary, increased their efforts for the subjugation of Sicily, and sent out thirty triremes to ravage the coasts of Laconia. At Syracuse, however, affairs were rapidly becoming desperate. The Athenian fleet was attacked at the mouth of the Great Harbour, and, although the assailants were defeated, the action gave Gylippus an opportunity of seizing the enemy's ports at Plemmyrium where a large amount of stores and provisions fell into his hands. Emboldened by their previous successes, and having by this time greatly improved their vessels, the Syracusans once more attacked the Athenian fleet, on which they inflicted a serious reverse. Nicias was now compelled to haul up his ships under the lines of the camp in the inner harbour. The Athenian superiority at sea was at an end, and the Syracusans were meditating still more important enterprises, when a fresh naval force of seventy-five triremes, with a large army on board, arrived from Athens. This was the expedition which had been placed under the joint command of Demosthenes and Eurymedon, and its arrival infused new spirit into the forces which Nicias could scarcely hold together. Demosthenes endeavoured to retake Epipolæ, but was twice defeated. Sickness broke out among the troops; the hopelessness of the attempt to reduce Syracuse became every day more apparent; and Demosthenes proposed to break up the camp and return home, where the army might be much more usefully employed in driving out the Spartans. Nicias, however, refused his consent, nor would he even remove the fleet out of the Great Harbour into the open sea at Thapsus or Catana. To the languor and indifference of an earlier time had succeeded a stubborn obstinacy, which would not acknowledge defeat.



TERMINAL STATUE OF HERMES.

Events soon compelled Nicias to do what in the first instance he had refused to contemplate. Gylippus received large reinforcements, and the position of the Athenians became so menacing that retreat was imperative. Preparations for departure were at once set on foot, when an eclipse of the moon, occurring on the night before the intended movement, struck such terror into the superstitious mind of Nicias that he consulted the soothsayers, and was told by them that the army must wait twenty-seven days, thus completing the circle of the lunar orb, before they could venture on quitting their position. Had the march been commenced early on the following day, as was originally intended, the Athenians would probably have got off without being observed by the enemy, who appears to have had no suspicion of such a design. But, in the ensuing interval, a knowledge of the fact reached the Syracusan lines, and the invaders were assailed both by sea and land. The land attack failed, but at sea the Athenians were entirely defeated, and Eurymedon was slain. The Syracusans then drew a barrier of vessels across the mouth of the Great Harbour, so as to imprison the Athenian fleet, and Nicias felt that, unless he could break through this obstacle, his entire forces would be captured or destroyed. He therefore embarked a large number of soldiers on board the vessels, and directed the entire navy to bear down upon the foe, and cut the intercepting line, if that were possible.

The Great Harbour of Syracuse is about five miles in circuit. Within that space were gathered nearly two hundred ships, the greater number of which belonged to the Athenians; and it was obvious that much would depend upon the issue of the contest about to take place. The major part of the Athenian army was drawn up on shore to witness the engagement, and the walls and roofs of Syracuse were crowded with non-combatants, eager to watch the progress of an action which was fraught with the most momentous consequences to themselves. The Athenians, sailing

full against the barrier of vessels at the mouth of the harbour, endeavoured to force a passage, but were repulsed, and the battle then became general. The iron stems of the vessels ground angrily against one another, and the noise mingled with the shouts of the combatants, and with the cheers or lamentations of the onlookers, who accompanied the motions of their friends with ineffectual gestures. Equal courage was exhibited on both sides, and for a long time victory hung in suspense. But, in the end, the greater spirit and self-reliance of the Syracusans, whose valour was stimulated by the memory of recent triumphs, prevailed over the superior numbers of the Athenians. Thucydides observes that the scene of the combat was the narrowest in which two such armaments had ever met.* The manœuvres of the ships were terribly shackled by this want of space, and the evil told most against the Athenians, for the simple reason that theirs was the larger force. Friends and foes became hopelessly entangled; the words of command were lost in the surrounding dissonance; and the battle degenerated into a scene of indiscriminate slaughter. The arrows and darts of the Athenians did less execution than the stones slung with admirable skill by the Syracusans; and the former, giving way to an access of despair, turned the heads of their vessels towards the land, and fled in terror from their opponents. At that lamentable sight, a great shriek of horror and dismay arose from the Athenian army on shore. Cries of victory went up from the pursuing vessels, and the Syracusans echoed them with shouts of joy and gratitude. Some of the Athenian soldiers rushed into the water to aid in saving the ships; but the case was beyond hope, and when the Athenian generals desired to make a fresh effort with the sixty vessels which remained to them, the crews declined to place themselves under conditions of such profitless danger. The ships were accordingly abandoned, and it was resolved to retreat by land to some friendly city, where the invaders thought they might yet hold out against the attacks of the enemy. The movement ought to have been commenced that very night, when the Syracusans, engaged in carousing over their victory, and in celebrating a religious festival, would probably have been ignorant of what was going on, or, at any rate, disinclined to prevent it. Nicias, however, was induced to suppose that all the roads were guarded, and therefore postponed his retreat until a season which he hoped would be more favourable.

RETREAT OF THE ATHENIANS FROM SYRACUSE.

When at length he moved, disasters of the most appalling kind closed round him. The army was formed into a hollow square, with the baggage and

* History, VII., 70.

camp-followers in the middle. Nicias led the van, while Demosthenes had command of the rear; and the intrepidity of both generals was tasked to the utmost. The unburied dead lay thickly about the camp, and it was necessary to abandon the sick and wounded, who, with pitiable wailings, clung round the knees of their comrades, imploring that they might not be left to the vengeance of an implacable foe. Some of these miserable creatures followed the rest of the army as far as their diminished powers would allow, and then dropped upon the road with such heart-rending cries that even the sternest melted into tears, and were thrown into a state of irresolution entirely subversive of military discipline. Added to all these horrors was an alarming scarcity of food, which was likely to grow more extreme each day, as supplies would not be readily obtainable in a hostile country. Nicias, who had never exhibited the highest resources of a commander when action and strategy were required, now stood forth with heroic grandeur, when cheerful endurance was the quality demanded. Ill and enfeebled as he was, he continually passed along the lines, encouraging his men at once by words and by example. He told them that their situation was not desperate, and bade them hope for a happy turn in their affairs. Messengers, he said, had been sent forward to the friendly Siculi, and on reaching their country they would be safe. With this ray of hope before them, the discomfited soldiery pursued their march in a westerly direction towards the interior of the island. At the ford of the Anapus, they were encountered by a body of Syracusans, whom they put to flight; then, having crossed the river, they continued their retreat with but slight molestation. Their movements, however, were extremely slow, and the Syracusans took advantage of the fact to fortify a narrow ridge between two deep ravines, which the Athenians would be compelled to cross ere they could issue from the valley of the Anapus. Nicias and Demosthenes consumed two days in endeavouring to force the position, when, finding it too strong for them, they struck off in a southerly direction towards the sea. It was hoped in this way to gain the territory of the Siculi by an indirect route; but the anticipation, like so many others, was doomed to disappointment. Fires were lighted in the camp to conceal the movement of the troops, and the division under Nicias set out. The men had not gone far, however, when those in the rear were struck with a panic, which separated them from the rest. The van pressed forward, but was presently stopped on the banks of the Cacyparis by a guard of Syracusans. These were overcome, and Nicias pushed on towards the valley of the Erineus, followed more slowly by Demosthenes. The Syracusans pursued with all speed, and soon came up with the division of the latter commander. Finding himself in a position from which escape was impossible, the road in front being closed by a wall, Demosthenes prepared to fight. The contest was conducted with great spirit; but when Demosthenes perceived that his rapidly-dwindling forces were completely surrounded by the enemy, he surrendered, on condition that his troops should neither be put to death, nor subjected to lingering tortures. On these terms, 6,000 men laid down their arms. Demosthenes himself made an attempt at suicide, but was prevented from completing his design.

For the present, Nicias had escaped. Having gained the further side of the Erineus, he drew up his troops on a neighbouring height, but was overtaken on the following day by the Syracusans, who informed him of the surrender of Demosthenes. Some negotiations followed, but the Syracusans refused to admit the proposal of Nicias that he should be suffered to retreat, under an engagement that Athens would indemnify Syracuse for the whole cost of the war. The Athenians were then partially surrounded, but were able to resume their march next morning, continually harassed by the missiles of their adversaries, and nearly exhausted by wounds, toil, and hunger. In this order they approached the banks of the Asinarus, which flows at the bottom of a deep hollow. Tormented with thirst, the miserable Athenians rushed down the steep incline into the water. The front ranks were violently hurled forward by those behind; hundreds were thrown into the river, trodden under foot, or impaled on the spears of those below; yet the raging mob of fugitives still pressed forward, eager to drink the water which was now thick with trampled earth, and polluted with human blood. The universal anarchy was increased by the Spartans, who, descending the slope, completed the massacre which the Syracusans had begun by showering stones upon their vanquished foe from the summit of the bank. Even those who escaped from the river were pursued and cut down by the cavalry; and Nicias now surrendered to Gylippus, with an earnest request that the carnage might be stopped, and a pathetic expression of his willingness to suffer anything in his own person that might be decreed. Orders to that effect were at once given by the Spartan commander; but they were tardily executed, and the number of slain was out of all proportion to the prisoners. No fewer than 40,000

men had started on this disastrous march, but only 10,000 remained at its close. During the six days of flight, many had deserted; others had been killed, or had died of fatigue and deprivation; and the final contest was little better than a massacre.*

The prisoners were treated with the cruelty which was never wanting in one community of Greeks towards another, although in their contests with the Persians they were often generous and forbearing. The vanquished Athenians and their allies were crowded together in the stone quarries of Achradina and Epipolæ, where, being left without shelter, and scantily supplied with food and water, many died of misery and exhaustion. Their bodies were purposely left unburied, and the place became so dangerous a centre of infection that the Syracusans were compelled to remove the survivors, lest a general pestilence should devastate the land. Nicias and Demosthenes were condemned to death, but contrived to avoid the ignominy of a public execution by committing suicide. Many of the other captives were sold into slavery, and it is related of some of these that they succeeded in procuring more lenient treatment by reciting passages from Euripides, whose dramas were but little known in Sicily, except by name. The retreat of Nicias and his army, and the total collapse of the Sicilian expedition, took place in the autumn of 413 B.C. This was the nineteenth year of the Peloponnesian War, and it might have been supposed that so great a reverse would have put an end to the struggle. The haughty spirit of the Athenians, however, could not yet be persuaded to seek a pacific understanding, and the war continued nine years longer, with varying fortunes and increasing bitterness.

When the news of the great defeat arrived at Athens, the citizens were for a time overcome with despair and consternation. They had lost a magnificent army; their naval power was crippled, and their reputation was so deeply injured that nothing but the most rapid and brilliant successes could restore it. In the meanwhile, the city itself was threatened by the Lacedæmonian post at Decelea. Attica was vexed by the continual inroads of the Spartans; food became scarce, owing to the destruction of cattle; and there were hardly men enough in Athens to guard the long extent of walls. Active measures, however, were taken for meeting the public exigencies. A new fleet was commenced; Cape Sunium was fortified, and the garrison on the coast of Laconia recalled. But fresh dangers were not slow in making their appearance. Chios rose in insurrection, and the Spartans, on the advice of Alcibiades, sent a fleet to the assistance of the islanders. By the same great but traitorous spirit, Erythræ, Clazomenæ, Teos, Miletus, and Lesbos, were induced to follow the example of Chios; and shortly afterwards the Spartan commander, Chalcidias, who had been sent forward with an advanced squadron, made a treaty with Tissaphernes, the Persian satrap of Ionia and the south-western coast of Asia Minor, by which it was promised that Persia should again receive the Grecian cities of Asia, together with all the territory that the Great King had at any time possessed in European Hellas. Miletus was placed in the hands of Tissaphernes, as a guarantee for the performance of these undertakings; and thus, for the sake of wreaking vengeance on her foe, Sparta did not hesitate to betray the most important regions of Hellas into the power of an Oriental despot. It cannot be questioned, however, that nearly all the Asiatic Greeks were desirous of shaking off their allegiance to Athens. Samos alone stood firm, and, the unanimity of the movement being broken, Athens was in a better position to resist the designs of her enemies. When, in 412 B.C., it became known that Chios had revolted, the reserve of 1,000 talents, set aside by Pericles for use only in the event of an actual invasion of Athenian territory, was appropriated to external needs. The fleet being ready, it was sent to Samos, as the head-quarters of naval operations, and these were conducted with so much energy that Lesbos and Clazomenæ were soon recovered. The Chians also were defeated, and their territories laid waste. The Peloponnesians at Miletus were attacked with success; yet, with the aid of the Persians under Tissaphernes, they were still able to hold the city. The satrap of Ionia, however, was speedily disgusted by an attempt of the Lacedæmonians to obtain a modification of the recent treaty. The forces of Sparta were now so powerful that the commanders thought themselves in a position to address Tissaphernes with some haughtiness, and a new treaty was in fact concluded. On the other hand, Tissaphernes objected to continuing the large money contributions which he had previously furnished; and when some Spartan commissioners arrived in Asia Minor, early in 412 B.C., for the purpose of remonstrating with the satrap, and with demands for the conclusion of a third treaty still less favourable to Persia, the rupture was complete.

* Thucydides, Book VII.; Plutarch, Life of Nicias; and other authorities.

By this time, Alcibiades was beginning to turn against his new friends, and they, on their part, were getting thoroughly dissatisfied with him. He had mortally offended King Agis by corrupting his wife, and the general levity of his disposition seemed contemptible to the Spartan nature. It began to be suspected that he was intriguing with the Persians against the people with whom he had allied himself, and the Ephors sent out instructions for his death. He was then on the coast of Asia Minor, and, being warned to escape, betook himself to Tissaphernes, to whom he suggested that a treaty should be concluded with Athens. This, however, was refused, and Alcibiades turned his eyes towards the land which had given him birth, and which in a moment of anger he had sought to ruin. Although he now knew well that he could not obtain the support of Persia, he offered the alliance of that Power as the price of his restoration to favour at Athens. For the prosecution of his designs, it was necessary that a complete revolution should be effected in his native State; and he therefore required that the democratic government should give place to one of aristocratical formation. A number of political clubs at Athens were already preparing the way for such a change by means of private assassinations and other secret agencies. The principal conspirators were found among the Athenian generals, and the chief conduct of the movement fell ultimately into the hands of Pisander. After considerable opposition, the people were reluctantly persuaded to entertain the idea of a new constitution, and Pisander, with ten others, was sent to Magnesia to treat with Alcibiades and Tissaphernes. But the negotiations were unsuccessful, and the satrap, reverting to the Spartans whom he had almost cast off, provided them with money, and concluded a new treaty by which the aid of a Phœnician fleet was granted, in consideration of the whole of Asiatic Greece being abandoned to the Persian monarch.

Meanwhile, the Athenian conspirators were taking measures to secure their ends. In the first place, they endeavoured to establish an oligarchical government at Samos, but were frustrated by the loyalty of the army and navy. At Athens itself, the plot was more successful. Members of the democratic body were continually murdered, and with so much secrecy that no one could tell by whom the crimes were committed. At the same time, every opportunity was taken for depreciating the results of democratic rule, and at length Pisander rose in the Assembly, and carried a resolution to the effect that a Committee of Ten should be appointed to prepare a new constitution. It was understood that this constitution, when its terms had been settled, should be submitted to the approval of the people; but the conspirators managed that the Assembly should be convened, not in the city itself, but in the temple of Poseidon at Colonus, a mile from Athens. The meeting was in truth packed with supporters of the revolution, and there was little doubt beforehand as to the issue of the discussion. Pisander then proposed that all the existing magistracies should be abolished; that payments for the discharge of civil functions should cease; and that a committee of five persons, with power to nominate ninety-five more, should be at once appointed. Each of the hundred was then to choose three persons, and the body of Four Hundred thus created was to be deemed an irresponsible Government, and to hold its sittings in the Senate House. A certain pretence of popular legislation was maintained by the proviso that these four hundred oligarchs were to convene, at such times as they thought proper, a select body of five thousand citizens, to deliberate on public affairs. The proposals of Pisander were ratified by the irregular Assembly he had called together; and thus, in 411 B.C., the constitution of the Athenian Republic was entirely destroyed. The Four Hundred at once proceeded to establish themselves in office. The Senate House having been occupied by a body of troops, the members of the new Government entered the edifice with daggers concealed under their garments. They were followed by a body-guard of a hundred and twenty youths, who had been the chief agents in the secret assassinations of the last few months. The Senate was dismissed, and the Four Hundred, after sacrifice and prayer, imprisoned or slew the principal leaders of the democratic party. A despotism, thinly disguised by constitutional forms, had been established in the city of Clisthenes and Pericles; yet it is doubtful whether, even at that moment, the people of Athens perceived that the loss of their liberties was the consequence of a fratricidal war, and of that fatal Sicilian Expedition to which the selfishness of Alcibiades had tempted the State he was ready at one moment to flatter, and at another to betray.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

LAST YEARS OF THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR.

The Rival Governments at Athens and Samos—Intrigues of the Four Hundred with Sparta—Counter-Revolution at Athens, and Deposition of the Four Hundred—Resources of the Chief Belligerents in 411 B.C.—Successes of Alcibiades and other Athenian Commanders—Return of Alcibiades to Athens—Intimate Understanding between the Spartan Lysander, and Cyrus, the Son of Darius Nothus—Alcibiades Deprived of his Command—Callicratidas and the Persians—Successes of the Spartans—Battle of Arginusæ—Death of Callicratidas, and Re-appointment of Lysander—Battle of Ægospotami—The Athenians finally Defeated—Siege of Athens—Negotiations for a Surrender—Severe Conditions of the Spartans—Athens Occupied by the Enemy—End of the Athenian Empire—Oligarchical Revolution—Reign of Terror of the Thirty Tyrants—Antagonism of Critias and Theramenes—Effects of the Tyranny—Murder of Alcibiades in Phrygia—Arrogance of Lysander—Insurrection of Thrasybulus at Phyle—Movement at the Piræus against the Thirty Tyrants—Spartan Interposition, and Restoration of the Democratic System at Athens—Socrates: his Life and Character—The Charge of Impiety brought against him—His Trial, Condemnation, and Death.

THE aristocratic revolution had triumphed at Athens, but at Samos it was a complete failure. This rendered the ultimate success of the autocrats very doubtful, and the Spartan king, Agis, disregarding pacific overtures from the Four Hundred, attempted to capture Athens, but was repulsed. Efforts were then made by the new Athenian rulers to win over the Samians to their cause; but the army stationed on the island determined to support the rights of the democracy, and deposed such of their officers as were known to hold contrary views. The soldiers formed themselves into a popular assembly, and Alcibiades was brought to Samos, in the belief that he was in a position to procure the aid of Persia for the democracy of Athens. Under these circumstances, the proposals of the Four Hundred were rejected, and Alcibiades, having been appointed one of the generals, employed himself in intrigues between the Samians and the Persians, which were equally deceptive of both. On the other hand, the dominant party at Athens intrigued with the Spartans, and even offered to put their hereditary enemies in possession of the Piræus. The latter, however, hesitated, and let the opportunity go by; but, had the favourable moment been seized, it is very possible that an arrangement might have been effected, by which the war would have been brought to an end, and the supremacy of Lacedæmon secured. It was not long before dissensions arose among the Four Hundred. Some of that body, less extreme in their views than the majority, were disinclined to lay their country at the feet of Sparta. The leaders of this section were Theramenes and Aristocrates; their chief opponents were Antiphon and Phrynichus. Neither party possessed much power; but the occurrence of the revolution indicated the existence among the Athenians of a considerable number of influential people who were disgusted with the mismanagement of the war, with its long duration, its profitless successes, and its calamitous defeats.

Perceiving the existence of much discontent, the Four Hundred, shortly after the assassination of Phrynichus, who was slain in open daylight as he was leaving the Senate House, began to think of summoning the deliberative body of five thousand; but before this could be done, a counter-revolution, carried out by means of an armed movement of the dissentients, resulted in the formation of a democratic Assembly. The dictators retained their executive powers for the present, and, while matters were yet in suspense, the whole city was agitated by intelligence that a Lacedæmonian fleet was approaching the Piræus. Its destination, however, was not Athens, but Eubœa, which, it will be recollected, was an Athenian possession. Ships were hastily sent out to encounter this force; but the crews were in every respect unequal to the work they had to perform, and at Eretria were entirely defeated. Eubœa was thus lost to Athens, which might now have been blockaded and starved out, had the Spartans acted with promptitude. The general feeling of alarm was intense, and the power of the Four Hundred could not survive it. The aristocratical rulers, who had certainly done nothing to justify the conspiracy by which they snatched at office, were deposed, and, after a few intermediate modifications, the old constitution was restored. The supremacy of the Four Hundred had not lasted more than four months, and its overthrow was followed by the recall of Alcibiades and some of his supporters. Most of the aristocratical party escaped, having good reason to fear the vengeance of their adversaries; but Antiphon and another were executed after trial.

The rest were tried in default, and sentenced to the loss of their property. Thus was the democracy once more triumphant.

The revolution and the counter-revolution both belong to 411 B.C.—a year in which the great history of Thucydides comes to an abrupt termination. A condition of such severe internal disturbance might conceivably have resulted in a peace, and at one time it appeared as if such would be the case. But neither the power of the belligerents, nor the spirit of animosity by which they were inflamed, was yet exhausted; and the war, after languishing for awhile, burst out again with renewed fury. The Peloponnesian allies were now formidable at sea, while the Athenian navy was terribly crippled by the disasters which had occurred before Syracuse. To increase the efficiency of their marine armament, the Spartans had placed their ships under the supreme sway of an officer called a Navarchus, who, though elected only for a year, enjoyed during that period such absolute authority that he was uncontrolled even by the Ephors, to whom the kings themselves were subject. It was determined to operate on an extensive scale against the Athenian dependencies in the neighbourhood of the Hellespont. The constant vacillations of Tissaphernes had compelled the Lacedæmonians to look for assistance to some other patron, and they hoped to find a more effectual or a more willing ally in Pharnabazus, the satrap on the Hellespont. But their anticipations were doomed to a miserable disappointment. Mindarus, the commander of the Peloponnesian fleet, sailed from Miletus to the straits of the Thracian Chersonese, closely pursued by the Athenian squadrons under Thrasyllus; and in August, 411 B.C., a great battle resulted in the defeat of the former. Cyzicus, which had revolted from the Athenians, was recovered by them not long afterwards, and the Peloponnesians were again defeated at sea, a fight near Abydos being determined in favour of Athens by the arrival of Alcibiades with eighteen ships from Samos. In the latter part of the year, Tissaphernes appeared at the Hellespont, having apparently been ordered by his sovereign to conciliate the Peloponnesians, whom his vacillations had estranged. Alcibiades, on visiting him, was arrested and sent to Sardis, from which, in a month's time, he escaped to Clazomenæ. Again reaching the Hellespont in the spring of 410 B.C., he found Mindarus and Pharnabazus besieging Cyzicus by sea and land. Together with the other Athenian admirals, he sailed up the straits under cover of darkness, and all the ships assembled at the island of Proconnesus. A battle ensued on the following day, when Alcibiades, by a pretended flight, drew off Mindarus from the harbour. Thrasybulus and Thrasyllus, taking advantage of his absence, and being favoured by misty and rainy weather, intercepted the return of the Spartan commander, who, seeing that he had no other resource, ran his ships on shore. Alcibiades then landed his men, and attacked Mindarus with so much vigour that the allied Spartans and Persians were defeated, and the fleet was captured, with the exception of some Syracusan vessels, which were burned by their own commander. Mindarus himself was killed, and the blow was admitted by the Spartans to be crushing.

Success continued to attend on the Athenians, and the Spartans were so discouraged that, as in a former year, they made overtures for peace. But Cleon the leather-seller had now been succeeded in the office of truculent demagogue by Cleophon, a maker of lamps; and Cleophon persuaded the Assembly to reject the proposed terms, which were to the general effect that both parties should stand just as they were. The war therefore went on, and Pharnabazus rendered great assistance to the Peloponnesians. But the Athenians, having reopened communications with the Euxine, were once more well supplied with food, and their position was fairly maintained throughout the whole of 409 B.C. In 408, Chalcedon surrendered to the forces of Athens, and Alcibiades marched in triumph into Byzantium. The military genius of this great captain was now so unmistakably apparent that he felt he could return to his own city in virtue of the recall which had been sanctioned three years before. His reception there in the spring of 407 B.C. was extremely flattering, and the speeches he made in the Senate and the Assembly, denying the impieties with which he had been charged, produced an excellent effect. His sentence was annulled, and his confiscated property restored. The curse pronounced on him by the priests of Ceres and Proserpina was revoked, and the leaden plate on which it had been engraved was cast into the sea. Alcibiades was then appointed to the sole and unrestricted command of a new armament, consisting of a hundred triremes and a land force; but, in order to prove his devotion to the national religion, he delayed his departure until after the celebration, in September, of the Eleusinian Mysteries.

Persia was at this time ruled by Darius II., surnamed Nothus, the younger of whose sons was Cyrus. To Cyrus was confided the government of Lydia, the Greater Phrygia, and Cappadocia, with the supreme command of the forces in the west of Asia. This prince was influenced by a strong feeling

of animosity towards the Athenians, and by the ambition of humbling them as the hereditary enemies of his country; and in the prosecution of his designs he found an able and unscrupulous coadjutor in the new admiral of the Peloponnesian fleet. This was Lysander—a man of humble birth, belonging to that degraded class of Lacedæmonians which was deprived of political rights. Lysander was a man incapable of being led away by pleasure from the pursuit of any scheme on which he had set his heart. He was superior to those temptations of bribery which were all-powerful with the higher ranks of his countrymen; but his nature was ambitious and remorseless, and he hesitated at nothing which might advance the fortunes of the State. The spring of 407 B.C. found him at Sardis, consulting with Cyrus, and it was resolved to carry on the war with the help of Persian gold. Cyrus conceived a high regard for Lysander, made ample promises of assistance, and declared that, if need were, he would coin into money the throne of gold and silver on which he sat. This intimate alliance boded no good to the Athenians. Alcibiades had hitherto reckoned on Persian support for his own country: he now discovered his error. He was obliged to retire from an attack on Andros, where he found the Spartans too strong for him. Want of funds drove him into stern exactions, which were repulsed by the people of Cyme with so much courage and spirit that Alcibiades, in revenge, devastated the whole territory. This conduct procured him a host of enemies among those who would otherwise have been his friends; while his dissolute self-indulgence when on shore, and the valuable time he thus consumed without effecting any results, soon destroyed his former popularity among the troops themselves. During his absence at Cyme, his pilot, Antiochus, acting in disobedience to orders, had brought the fleet to an action, and been defeated; and all these circumstances produced so bad an impression that Alcibiades was succeeded in the command by ten generals, the chief of whom was Conon.

ON THE COAST OF SAMOS.

Feeling that his life would not be secure if he returned to Athens, Alcibiades retired to his estates in the Thracian Chersonese, where in former years he had built a castle, doubtless thinking it probable that a day might come when, owing either to the fickleness of his countrymen or to his own intrigues, he would be glad to find refuge in some place of strength. About the time that Conon assumed the principal command, in lieu of Alcibiades, Lysander was succeeded by Callicratidas, the year of office of the former having expired. The practice of an annual change seems to have had little to recommend it. The removal of

Lysander was unpopular among his own seamen, and gave offence to Cyrus. Callicratidas was encountered by the greatest obstacles, and the alliance between Persia and Lacedæmon was threatened with dissolution. On Cyrus refusing to supply him with money, the new commander obtained what he wanted from the people of Miletus and Chios, and was presently in possession of a hundred and forty triremes —a naval force double the size of that which obeyed the orders of Conon. By this powerful fleet, the Spartans were enabled, in 406 B.C., to take Methymna, in the island of Lesbos, and to defeat the Athenians in the harbour of Mitylene. In the latter action, Conon lost thirty ships, but saved the rest by hauling them on to the beach, under the walls of the town. Mitylene was then closely blockaded, and Cyrus, recovering from his annoyance at the removal of Lysander, sent money to his successor. The Athenians, however, were resolved not to give up Mitylene without a struggle, and therefore fitted out, with extraordinary despatch, a fleet of 110 triremes, which was reinforced at Samos by forty more vessels.

The desired action was fought off the small islands of Arginusæ, between the coast of Asia and the south-eastern shores of Lesbos. Thither the Athenians had proceeded, with a view to relieving Mitylene, and Callicratidas sailed out with an inferior force to meet them. A long and desperate action ensued, terminating in the defeat of the Spartans, the loss of seventy-seven vessels, and the death of Callicratidas, who, while standing on the prow of his own ship, to direct the boarding operations, was thrown into the water by the collision of the opposing tiremes. Mitylene was thus relieved, for the remainder of the Spartan vessels left there were glad to withdraw while time permitted. The Athenian loss in the battle of Arginusæ was twenty-five ships. Several of the generals were afterwards impeached at Athens for having allowed the crews of some of these to be drowned without making any effort to save them, and for having neglected to recover the bodies of the dead for burial. How far they were really guilty is not at all clear; but, by a sentence passed in a manner wholly illegal, and on that ground strongly opposed by Socrates and some of the other senators, the accused were condemned to drink hemlock. One of those who were thus cut off from the further service of their country was a son of Pericles, bearing the same name.

The victory of Arginusæ was the last of the Athenian successes. It ought to have been followed up vigorously, and without delay; but the fleet remained inactive at Samos for the remainder of the year. Callicratidas being now dead, it was necessary to appoint another chief, and the influence of Cyrus was exerted in favour of the return of Lysander. As it was contrary to Spartan usage that the office should be held twice by the same man, Lysander, though in fact the principal commander, occupied a nominal position of inferiority, and received the title of Epistoleus, or Secretary. The Lacedæmonian forces soon felt the impetus of this energetic nature. Cyrus evinced his delight by sending fresh contributions of money, and, when his father lay dying in Media, he confided to Lysander the government of the satrapy during his absence. This, however, did not prevent the latter taking measures for the prosecution of the war. Arriving in the Hellespont in 405 B.C., he laid siege to Lampsacus, on the Asiatic side of the straits. The Athenians, who had left the narrow seas unguarded, despatched their fleet to Ægospotami (the Goat's River), on the opposite shore. Here, after trying for a long while to bring the enemy to an action, they allowed themselves to lapse into a false security, and neglected discipline to an extent which called forth the energetic warnings of Alcibiades, who from his Thracian stronghold watched the progress of affairs with anxiety. At length, in September, 405 B.C., Lysander, finding the Athenian fleet totally unprepared for action, many of the seamen being on shore, bore down with such suddenness and strength that, without striking a blow, he captured nearly all the ships. Between three and four thousand prisoners were put to death, and the power of Athens was effectually broken.

The news of this overwhelming disaster (which has been attributed to Persian gold and Athenian treachery) struck the people at home with a dismay that paralysed their action, and almost suspended their powers of thought. They feared that the city would be besieged without delay, and sought to provide against the contingency by blocking up two out of their three ports. Lysander, however, did not at once march upon the Attic capital. He preferred to reduce the citizens by the slow process of famine, and with this view compelled the garrisons of all the capitulating towns to enter Athens, so that the demand upon the stores of food accumulated there might be the greater, and the final argument of hunger be the sooner reached. The Athenian dependencies, with the exception of Samos, yielded to the conqueror without any pretence of resistance, and in November Lysander appeared off Ægina, when, after devastating Salamis, he proceeded to blockade the Piræus. The whole Peloponnesian army then marched into Attica, and encamped at the very gates of Athens. The people

of that devoted city had previously performed a grand act of reconciliation, by which it was hoped to efface the bitter internal dissensions which had so long divided class from class. With the exception of a few criminals of the worst order, all prisoners were released, and the citizens, assembling in the Acropolis, took a solemn oath of mutual forbearance and harmony.

The pressure of want was already being sternly experienced when Lysander appeared before the walls; yet, in their proposals for a capitulation, the Athenians required that their fortifications should be preserved, and that the Piræus should be allowed to remain in its existing condition. These terms, however, were rejected, and Theramenes, who had formerly been one of the Four Hundred, was permitted, at his own request, to visit Lysander, in order to ascertain the precise extent of the Lacedæmonian demands. There are grounds for believing that Theramenes acted the part of a traitor, and purposely delayed the negotiations with a view to the entire subjection of his State. At any rate, he remained three months with Lysander, and on his return in 404 B.C. affirmed that the Ephors alone had power to treat. But the famine was now so extreme that a speedy surrender on any conditions became imperative. Accordingly, Theramenes was sent to Sparta, to make what terms he could. The Thebans, the Corinthians, and others of the allies, were inclined to blot out the very existence of Athens, and to sell her population into slavery; but this cruel proposition was resisted by the Spartans, who at least acted with apparent magnanimity, though it is not unlikely that their real motive was a desire to hold Athens as a possession of their own. The conditions imposed by the Ephors, however, were sufficiently onerous. The Long Walls, and the fortifications of the Piræus, were to be destroyed. The Athenians were to give up their foreign dependencies, and thenceforward to confine themselves to the territory of Attica. All their ships of war were to be surrendered, with the exception of twelve sail; the exiles were to return, and Athens herself was to become the ally of Sparta. Great as was the humiliation of these terms, they were received with joy by a population which the extremity of hunger had rendered abject and without hope.

In the course of March, 404 B.C., Lysander arrived at Athens, and took possession of the city. He was accompanied by his fleet and his army, and the latter remained until the required conditions had been fully executed. The destruction of the naval arsenals, of the ships upon the stocks, and of the fortifications, was of course a work of time, and it was made additionally painful to the Athenians by the spirit of brutal insolence with which it was conducted. The proceedings assumed the character of a grand festival, at which female flute-players, and dancers with chaplets on their heads, celebrated the triumph of Sparta and her allies. As the masonry of the walls fell in huge masses, before the instruments of the working parties, the Peloponnesian soldiers repeatedly exclaimed that Greece had at length recovered her liberty; but the orator Lysias has well remarked that freedom received its deathblow at that disastrous epoch. However great the faults of the Athenians, they had at any rate maintained a standard of popular government, from which, in spite of all its abuses, much more was to be hoped than from the military routine of Sparta. The great war now concluded had been an error on all sides, and had done more than anything else to weaken the national life of Greece. It had lasted twenty-eight years, with but slight intermissions; and it is remarkable that, from the commencement, many had anticipated that such would be its duration. It is also worthy of note that peace was concluded on the anniversary of the very day once rendered illustrious by the battle of Salamis. Seventy-four years had now passed since the establishment of the Confederacy of Delos; and it was that Confederacy, with Athens for its animating spirit, which had led to the formation of the brilliant but short-lived Athenian Empire. The Confederacy itself soon gave place to the dictation of Athens, and it cannot be said that her supremacy was exercised in a conscientious spirit, or with a single-minded regard for the interests of all Greece. But the dominion of Athens had been in many important respects a civilizing influence, because of the intellectual power of her sons; and it is impossible not to feel commiseration for the fate of a city which has done so much for all times, and for the whole world. Nevertheless, the true sway of Athens was mental, rather than physical; and this higher task was pursued with even greater force and freedom after the sceptre of Imperial dominion had been snatched away.

The exiles who returned to Athens were for the most part members of the oligarchical party, and they at once directed their energies to the destruction of the democracy. The head of the aristocratical faction was Critias, a favourite disciple of Socrates, an uncle of Plato, and himself a man of great ability. He was aided in his projects by Theramenes and several others; and the conspirators, having matured their plans, sent for

Lysander, who was then besieging Samos, and requested his assistance in remodelling the constitution. Lysander was exceedingly well-inclined to the task, and, when a Committee of Thirty was proposed for the temporary government of the Republic, he bluntly reminded the Assembly that the personal safety of the citizens lay at his mercy, and that they had better accept what they could get. The committee was accordingly appointed, and its members soon received the title of the Thirty Tyrants. Lysander then returned to Samos, which surrendered in the latter part of the summer. At Athens, an immense proscription was carried out by the governing committee, which always acted in a sanguinary spirit, and often without even the pretence of legal forms. Large numbers of the democratic party were put to death—some by a kind of sentence, others by secret assassination. Socrates added to his other great services by opposing this ferocious tyranny. A decree was issued, forbidding the philosophers to teach the principles of their systems; but Socrates would not be silenced, and exasperated the supporters of despotism by the dialectical skill with which he confuted their reasonings. On a certain occasion, he refused to form one of five persons ordered to bring back from Salamis an eminent Athenian who had sought refuge there. The reign of terror was supported by a Spartan garrison, which Critias was not ashamed to procure, and to instal in the Acropolis. Critias was undoubtedly the worst of these tyrants. Theramenes was comparatively moderate, and his willingness to allow the Athenians some slight measure of liberty, and to retain the forms of constitutional rule, brought down upon himself the murderous animosity which had previously been confined to the democratic body. The proscription became still more severe. Persons of all classes were executed without form of trial, and the most abominable devices of treachery were employed to throw them off their guard. As these events proceeded, Theramenes evinced increasing moderation, and one day, as he entered the Senate-house, Critias denounced him as a public enemy, and ordered him to instant death. Theramenes vainly endeavoured to seek refuge at the altar standing in the edifice. He was dragged away by the principal of the eleven officers charged with the execution of all capital sentences. Death was inflicted by a dose of hemlock, and Theramenes expired with a calm and dignified defiance of his enemies, little in harmony with the low moral tone which had distinguished the greater part of his life.

After the death of Theramenes, Critias tyrannised without control over the miserable Athenians. It is said that nearly fourteen hundred persons fell victims to this sanguinary despotism, and that five thousand emigrated, leaving their property behind them. Some of the fugitives found refuge at Thebes, Megara, and other cities hostile to Athens; but Sparta continued to exhibit the bitter hostility with which she had long been animated. A fine of five talents was imposed on any Spartan who did not hand over these wretched outcasts to the Thirty Tyrants of their native city. But the democracy of Athens had not a more relentless enemy in Sparta herself than in the rulers who oppressed the State. The embankments and fortifications of the Piræus, which had cost an enormous sum in money, and an immense amount of labour, were sold for three talents, that they might be demolished; and every endeavour was made to depress the national spirit, which had certainly been identified far more with democratic than with oligarchical forms of government.

The death of Alcibiades occurred during the period when the Thirty Tyrants held sway in Athens. He had been included in the list of the proscribed, but, being established in his Thracian castle, his life was not exposed to immediate danger. Nevertheless, he doubted his continued safety even there, and, sacrificing much of his wealth, he fled into Phrygia, where he solicited from the Persian satrap, Pharnabazus, a safe-conduct to the court of Susa. This was refused, but Pharnabazus set apart a revenue for his maintenance, and suffered him to live in Phrygia. It might have been supposed that even Spartan virulence would have been satisfied with his fall; but orders were sent out to Lysander, directing that he should be put to death. The sanguinary edict may perhaps be attributed to the personal hatred of King Agis, whose wife had been dishonoured by the refugee; but, whatever the motive, the act was carried out with unflinching resolution. The house of Alcibiades was surrounded by a band of desperadoes, and set on fire. Seeing the gravity of his position, Alcibiades, in whose nature courage was certainly not wanting, rushed out sword in hand, and made so fierce an onslaught on his assailants that they drew back, but attacked him from a distance with javelins and arrows until he lay dead upon the ground. This remarkable man is one of the most brilliant figures in the whole compass of Athenian history, but also one of the least reputable. Personal ambition, vanity, and love of pleasure, were the altars on which he sacrificed every consideration of honour, all regard for his country, and all respect for himself. His assassination, which occurred in 404 B.C., is involved

in a good deal of obscurity. The act has been attributed to the jealousy of Pharnabazus, as well as to the hatred of the Spartan Government, and the personal animosity of the king; but, as there is no sufficient reason for imputing so deadly a sentiment to the Persian satrap, it seems more likely that the deed was prompted either by the Spartans, or by the Thirty Tyrants at Athens. Alcibiades had always entertained a dread of assassination, or of some judicial sentence not greatly differing from secret murder. When recalled from Sicily, he had been asked whether he could not trust his country. "As to my life," he replied, "not even my mother, lest by mistake she should put in a black ball for a white." This was the explanation of his repeated flights from Athens; and yet fate had reserved for him a cruel death far removed from home, and under the protection of one whom he had idly trusted.

The supremacy of Greece was now transferred from Athens to Sparta, and the smaller States were not long in discovering that they were no gainers by the change. The Lacedæmonians behaved with insolence and rapacity, and gave great offence to the Thebans and Corinthians by appropriating the whole booty which had accrued from the war. Lysander was the most distinguished and the most powerful man in Greece; but his disposition was not such as to recommend him to any but the servile, who are prepared to flatter all whose power gives them the opportunity of patronage. His arrogance, indeed, was so extreme that Sparta herself took offence, and feared that this successful soldier was using the Thirty Tyrants at Athens, and the provisional administrations of the subject towns, for the promotion of his own ambitious views. A remarkable movement began towards the close of 404 B.C. Some Athenian exiles in Bœotia, acting in combination with a number of Thebans, captured the fortress of Phyle, situated in the ravines of Mount Parnes, on the direct road to Athens. Here they sustained a siege by a Spartan and Athenian force, and the Thirty Tyrants began to fear a reaction against their power. Salamis and Eleusis were accordingly occupied as places of refuge in case of the worst. The Eleusinians, who had been transported to Athens to make room for the Athenian garrison in their own city, were slain, in obedience to a vote of the three thousand holders of the suffrage, extorted by Critias; for it was painfully evident that the citizens had not sufficient manliness to resist his edicts. But the rule of this ferocious despot was nearly at an end. Thrasybulus, who had the chief command at Phyle, was continually receiving accessions to his numbers, and his position was so strong, in the midst of rocky gorges and steep mountain paths, that his adversaries were baffled in all attempts to reduce it. At length, the spirit of reaction became apparent at Athens, and Thrasybulus, who was well informed of what was passing, ventured to march on the Piræus, which he occupied without resistance. The whole force of the Thirty Tyrants was soon afterwards sent against their opponent, who, retiring within the citadel of the Piræus, the ascent to which was abrupt and difficult, awaited attack with some confidence. The assault was repelled with so much effect that the advancing columns were hurled in disorder down the hill, Critias was slain, and the whole army was entirely defeated. The result was a revolution in Athens itself. The Thirty Tyrants were exchanged for Ten, some of whom, however, had been members of the former body. The others, who belonged to the more extreme section, retired to Eleusis, and both factions sent to Sparta for aid. Lysander accordingly re-entered Athens at the head of a strong Lacedæmonian force, while his brother Libys blockaded the Piræus with a fleet of forty vessels. Ere long, Lysander was superseded in his command by the Spartan king, Pausanias, who was not unfavourably inclined towards the Athenians, and who appears to have been sincerely desirous of re-establishing peace in that unhappy city. After vindicating his power by defeating Thrasybulus, Pausanias granted a truce, for the purpose of sending envoys to Sparta. Negotiations followed, and it was finally decided that the exiles in the Piræus should be re-admitted to Athens; that an amnesty should be granted for all that had passed, excepting as regarded the acts of the Tyrants; and that Eleusis should be recognised as an independent city, and a place of refuge for those who had compromised themselves at Athens.

Peace was at length fully concluded between Athens and Sparta. The Peloponnesian army quitted Attica, and Thrasybulus, at the head of the exiles, re-entered Athens in the spring of 403 B.C., and offered a solemn sacrifice and thanksgiving on the Acropolis. The democratic constitution was restored, and a committee appointed for revising the laws of Draco and Solon. The amended laws were afterwards inscribed on the walls of the Pœcile Stoa, or painted colonnade of the market-place, in the full Ionic alphabet of twenty-four letters, which, though long employed by private individuals, then for the first time superseded in public documents the older Attic alphabet of sixteen or eighteen letters, introduced from

Phœnicia. The rule of the Thirty Tyrants had lasted for eight months; but during that short time they had committed so many acts of cruelty and spoliation that the year of their usurpation was called "the year of anarchy." The restored democracy acted with moderation, and Eleusis was soon afterwards brought back into community with Athens, after a vain attempt to renew the civil war. Athens was once more independent; but it was the independence of a shattered commonwealth, which existed rather by sufferance than by the right of internal strength.

DEATH OF ALCIBIADES.

Although Athens had now escaped from the savage despotism of the Thirty Tyrants, and had returned to the older constitution of the majority a spirit of intolerance still existed, which, not long after the restoration of the democracy, claimed a most illustrious victim. We have hitherto had occasion to mention Socrates more than once, but not prominently in his philosophical character. Yet this is the character in which he is chiefly known, and by virtue of which he became an intellectual power, whose influence has never ceased throughout the civilized world. Socrates was the son of a sculptor, and in early life himself worked at the same art with considerable success. Statues of the Graces, clothed in flowing garments, and carved by him, were to be seen in the Acropolis; but on the death of his father he abandoned the pursuit, in order that he might devote himself to philosophical studies. He served as a soldier during three campaigns of the Peloponnesian War, and distinguished himself by courage, hardihood, and endurance. But this was a mere episode in his life. On returning to Athens, he resumed his habits of meditation and inquiry, and gathered about him a large number of disciples, whom he taught without fee or reward, and in whom he had the power of inspiring the warmest affection and the deepest reverence. That there must have been something remarkably attractive in his moral nature and his mental composition is certain, for he had not those advantages of personal good looks which so powerfully affected the Athenians. His figure was short and ungainly, and his face so singularly ugly that it was likened to that of a satyr—a comparison which the portraits of Socrates amply justify. Alcibiades, in Plato's dialogue of "The Banquet," is represented as saying that Socrates was most like the figures of Silenus that were seated in the workshops of statuaries, which the artists made holding reeds or flutes, but which, when they were opened down the middle, contained

SOCRATES DRINKING THE HEMLOCK.

within them statues of the gods. The comparison may be taken as a lively expression of the view generally held by those who came within the influence of this famous man; yet assuredly no one ever did less to court the favour either of the many or the few. His political opinions were anti-democratical, though he was equally opposed to the ferocious cruelty of the Thirty Tyrants, who were derived from the oligarchy. His disregard of personal appearance, the studied bluntness of his speech, and the perfect independence of his character, were circumstances which would have offended many, had they not been accompanied by qualities of a more winning order. But he belonged to a city which was always quick to recognise genius, and he gave a new direction to those philosophical systems which formed no inconsiderable portion of the mental life of Athens. Until his time, the seekers after wisdom had been termed Sophists—a name which in truth begged the whole question, by assuming that the men so called were actually wise, and endowed with peculiar abilities. The word had not then acquired the depreciatory meaning which it now possesses; but to Socrates it appeared presumptuous, and he preferred to be called a Philosopher—that is, a *lover* of wisdom. He would modestly say of himself, "I know nothing, except that I know nothing;" and when the Oracle of Delphi pronounced that no man was wiser than he, he was extremely perplexed, and ultimately came to the conclusion that it could only be because he was conscious of his ignorance, and others were not. In young manhood he had received instruction from Parmenides, Zeno, and other members of the Eleatic school, from whom it is probable that he derived what is called his negative method of reasoning, by which he exposed the direct fallacies, or the unsupported assumptions, of others, without putting anything in their place. But all the most distinctive elements of his philosophy were doubtless the results of his own meditation.

Our knowledge of the Socratic philosophy and method of argument is mainly derived from his disciples Plato and Xenophon, for Socrates himself never committed his thoughts to writing. To oratory and eloquence he made no pretensions, but inculcated his opinions in a conversational manner, by which, through the agency of a series of questions, contrived with wonderful art and penetration, he made his opponents or his scholars refute their own misconceptions, and thus arrive at a clearer knowledge of the truth. His habit of cross-questioning, and the ludicrous self-contradictions in which it frequently involved the disputant, must have been exasperating to all who were not earnest seekers after truth; and it is possible that something of the ill-will which Socrates gathered about himself, and which was as strong in the one direction as the admiration of his friends was in the other, may have been attributable to this very practice. His imperturbability, which he is said to have had frequent occasion to exercise at home, owing to the hot temper of his wife, Xanthippe, gave additional provocation to those who were already vexed and humiliated by the superior mental powers of the philosopher.* It is certain that for many years Socrates had become unpopular amongst several classes of his countrymen, though still retaining the unbounded affection of those who knew him best. Aristophanes, who doubtless expressed the opinion of a large number, introduced Socrates into his comedy of "The Clouds" as a mischievous speculator in religion, and a corrupter of the youth of Athens. His posture towards the religion of his country is somewhat doubtful. He never openly attacked it; yet it is obvious that the tendency of his reasoning was to weaken accepted dogmas, as things unprovable and worthless, and to set in their place a much more exalted conception of Deity, of virtue, and of the duties of the human being. No one ever had a stronger conviction of the reality of moral goodness, and it would be painful indeed if we were forced to suppose, as happily we are not, that his life was in contradiction with his doctrine. Socrates is said to have confessed that he felt within himself some of the worst passions of human nature; but he added that he controlled them by the exercise of reason, and by the sense of moral law; and we are justified in assuming that he spoke the truth.

A German writer has remarked of Socrates that "his proofs always hinged on this assumption—that it is impossible to start from one true thought, and be entangled in a contradiction with any other; and also that knowledge derived from any one point, and obtained by correct combination, cannot contradict that which has been deduced in like manner from any other point."† Socrates was essentially an ethical philosopher. Physical science he appears to have regarded with contempt, and not, perhaps, without reason, considering the position which it occupied in those

* It is but fair to the memory of Xanthippe to record that she showed great solicitude for her husband when he lay in prison under sentence of death; and that Socrates himself spoke in high praise of her motherly qualities to his son Lamprocles, as Xenophon has related in the "Memorabilia."

† Schleiermacher: "Worth of Socrates as a Philosopher."

days, when no laborious investigation into the phenomena of the universe was believed to be necessary by the theorist, and the place of inquiry was filled by a number of wild hypotheses. He cared so little for Nature, in the ordinary acceptation of the term, that he went but seldom beyond the walls of the city; for the fields and woods, as he told one of his young disciples, could teach him nothing.* It was the soul and character of man that interested him. Unlike his great follower, Plato, there was little of the poet in his composition. In all things he required exact definition, and his tendency was to underrate whatever lured people away from the solid basis of fact. The only sign of anything mystical in his nature is to be found in his belief that he was attended by a dæmon, who gave him advice in all the important passages of his life, and even in some that were wholly trivial. But it is by no means certain what he meant by this monitor; and it has always been a subject of controversy whether the dæmon was simply an impersonation of the more subtle agencies of the mind, or whether Socrates really believed in some supernatural and mysterious guidance.

The attack of Aristophanes had been made as early as 423 B.C. It probably had a considerable effect on general opinion; but it cannot be charged with the persecution which resulted in the death of the philosopher, for that persecution did not take any definite form until 399 B.C.—four and twenty years later. It was then that Melitus, a leather-seller, Anytus, a poet, and Lycon, a rhetorician, or teacher of oratory, accused Socrates of not recognising the gods acknowledged by the city, of introducing new deities, and of corrupting the youth: the very charges formerly made by Aristophanes. He was tried before the dicasts, or jurymen appointed for the investigation of criminal offences, and there is nothing to show that he had not a fair trial. How the charges were made out, however, it is difficult to imagine, for, as we have said, he never committed himself to any positive denial of the religious ideas entertained by his countrymen. On the contrary, he performed the usual sacrifices to the gods, and advised his followers to do likewise. That he corrupted the mind of youth, is to the full as unlikely. But the general effect of his teaching was probably understood only too well by his accusers, and it was also recollected that he had been the friend of Alcibiades and Critias, both of whom had developed into oppressors of the Athenian State. Socrates does not appear to have expected an acquittal; and he made a speech in his defence, which was characterized by a spirit of independence little calculated to propitiate his judges. Nevertheless, he was condemned only by the small majority of five or six in a court which consisted of nearly six hundred jurymen. After his conviction, he again addressed the court, assuming a tone of superiority which seems to have had an exasperating effect upon the minds of the dicasts. He was entitled by the Athenian law to propose alternative penalties to that which there was reason to believe would be pronounced on him. He might have besought imprisonment, or banishment, or a fine, in place of death, and it is possible that his representations would have been favourably received. But he made no submission that was likely to give satisfaction, and he was accordingly sentenced to death by a larger majority than that which had recorded the verdict of guilty. He then addressed the court for the third time; and all these speeches are preserved by Plato under the general title of "The Apology of Socrates." His concluding words were solemn and impressive. "It is now," he said, "time to depart,—for me to die, for you to live. But which of us is going to a better state is unknown to every one but God."

Owing to the festival of Delos, an interval of thirty days elapsed between the condemnation of Socrates and the execution of the sentence. During this time, he was urged by his friends to escape, and means were offered by which he might not improbably have delivered himself from his enemies. But he replied that he had been sentenced by the laws of his country, and that it was the duty of a good citizen to obey those laws, even when they told against himself. His argument on this point is the subject of the Platonic dialogue of "Crito." The last day of his life was employed in a much higher discussion—in a discourse with his faithful disciples on the immortality of the soul. This was a subject that had always deeply interested Socrates, and, during the hours which immediately preceded his decease, he followed through all its intricate windings that sublime argument on which he based the hopes of a hereafter. There are few nobler or more touching pictures of a grand human spirit preserving its self-possession, its calmness, its dignity, and even its cheerfulness, in the face of approaching doom, than that which is contained in the dialogue of "Phædo," wherein Plato, though not from personal knowledge, preserves the last teachings of Socrates. Towards evening he went to bathe; after which he sat down, and spoke but little. The chief executioner, on entering, said he was well convinced that Socrates, unlike many

* The "Phædrus" of Plato, 10.

others, would not curse him when he required that he should drink the poison. He then bade him farewell, and besought that he would bear as easily as might be what was inevitable. He had greater need himself, however, of such kindly exhortations, for, having spoken, he broke into tears, and withdrew. The man who was to administer the poison presently came in with the hemlock in a cup, and told Socrates that when he had swallowed the draught he was to walk about until he felt a heaviness in his legs; he was then to lie down, and the drug would do its work. Socrates took the fatal infusion with the same composure that he had manifested throughout; but his friends were overcome with emotion, and broke into passionate weeping. The dying sage gently reproved his disciples, and, lying down on his back, awaited the end. It came gradually, and in the form of a creeping numbness ascending from the lower to the higher parts. "Consider whether you have anything else to say," whispered Crito, when the gathering cold had nearly reached the heart. "To this question," writes Plato, "he made no reply, but shortly after gave a convulsive movement, and the man covered him, and his eyes were fixed; and Crito, perceiving it, closed his mouth and eyes." Thus passed away, at the age of seventy, the noblest product of ancient wisdom—a light in the midst of much surrounding darkness, and a splendid example for the encouragement of man.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

EXPEDITION OF CYRUS THE YOUNGER, AND RETREAT OF THE TEN THOUSAND.

Designs of Cyrus the Younger—Enlistment of Greek Levies—The March from Sardis—Crossing of the Euphrates, and Passage of the Mesopotamian Desert—Disposition of the Invading Army—Advance of Artaxerxes and his Host—The Battle of Cunaxa—Death of Cyrus the Younger—His Character and Acquirements—Courage and Discipline of the Greeks—Abandonment of the Expedition—Treachery of Tissaphernes—Perilous Position of the Grecian Army—Appointment of Xenophon to the Chief Command—The Homeward March—Pursuit by the Persians—The Greeks enter the Territory of the Carduchians—Passage of the River Centrites—Terrible Sufferings from Frost and Snow—Subterranean Villages—Arrival of the Army within View of the Sea—Kind Reception by the Macronians—The Country of the Colchians—Poisonous Honey—Voyage by Sea to Sinope—Return to Europe—Incident at Byzantium—Further Acts of the Ten Thousand—Later Career of Xenophon.

PERSIA has hitherto, in its relations with Greece, stood forth as the superior Power: superior, that is to say, in extent of military resources, and in the capacity to invade foreign countries; though inferior in that persistent heroism, that self-sacrificing and dauntless resolution, which generally results from freedom. We have now to contemplate the fortunes of a Greek army penetrating into the heart of the Persian Empire, and for a time exciting apprehension in the minds of the Great King and his generals. Cyrus, the second son of Darius Nothus, had been charged, shortly after the death of his father, in 405 B.C., with plotting to assassinate his brother, Artaxerxes Mnemon, under circumstances already related.* His life was spared, and he was allowed to resume his government of Lydia, the Greater Phrygia, and Cappadocia; but he returned to Sardis brooding over schemes of revenge against Artaxerxes, whom he accused of having wrongfully suspected him. To deprive his brother of the throne, and usurp the regal power, was the plan which chiefly recommended itself to his mind; but so great a design could not at once be accomplished. When, however, the Peloponnesian War came to an end, a large number of Greeks accustomed to fighting, and incapable of peaceful labours, found themselves suddenly deprived of the opportunities of adventure which had almost become necessary to their existence. Cyrus enlisted several of these, on pretence of waging a local war with Tissaphernes, the satrap of Ionia and Caria; and the Greek levies thus collected were placed under the orders of Clearchus, a Spartan out of favour with his own country, in consequence of disobedience when in a post of importance at Byzantium.

The mercenaries were for a time distributed in various towns, but at the beginning of 401 B.C. were brought together at Sardis, with the alleged intention of attacking the freebooters of Pisidia. Their number amounted to rather more than 8,000, and Cyrus had also under his command a force of 100,000 Asiatics. Starting from Sardis in the spring, he marched to Celænæ, in the south-west of Phrygia, where he awaited the arrival of some Greek reinforcements, which brought the Hellenic total up to about 13,000. The army then turned north, and, afterwards bending to the east, reached Tyriæum, where Epyaxa, wife of the hereditary prince of Cilicia, conciliated the Greeks by a large

* See Chapter XXI., p. 255.

present of money, without which they would doubtless have proceeded no further. Syennesis, the husband of this princess, was stationed with a considerable force in the pass leading across Mount Taurus from Lycaonia into Cilicia. He was supposed by Artaxerxes to be acting loyally as a vassal of the Persian crown; but his resistance was a mere pretence, and he speedily abandoned the position. His friendliness to Cyrus was still further shown by an additional supply of money, and a contingent of troops. The real destination of the army had been kept a secret from the Greeks up to this point; but, after they had passed through a large portion of Cilicia, and Pisidia lay far behind, it seemed only too probable that they were to be led against the Persian king. Cyrus, however, declared he meant nothing more than an attack on the satrap of Syria, with whom he had a quarrel; and, on receiving a promise of augmented pay, the Greeks were induced to proceed. At Issus they were joined by the fleet, consisting partly of Lacedæmonian ships, which conveyed a reinforcement of 1,100 Greek soldiers; and the whole force then set forward with renewed spirit.

The alarm inspired by the advance of Cyrus was so great that Abrocomas, the satrap of Syria, fled in consternation, without making any attempt to defend the narrow pass leading from Cilicia into Syria, and lying between the sea and Mount Amanus. As this road was closed at both ends by gates, it might easily have been held against the invading hosts, had Abrocomas possessed courage enough to do his duty. But not a blow was struck; the pass was left open, and the forces of Cyrus presently reached Myriandrus, a sea-port on the Mediterranean, where two of the Greek generals deserted. It was not until the army had reached Thapsacus, on the western bank of the Euphrates, that the Greeks were informed of the true object of their march. They were on their way to Babylon, where Cyrus intended to depose his brother. The announcement was received with cries of anger and accusations of bad faith; for an enterprise of such magnitude and peril was more than the Greeks had anticipated when they took service under Cyrus, although they had guessed it for some time past. The discontent, however, was speedily allayed by the prospect of a large reward, and, as the water of the Euphrates happened to be low at the time, the soldiers at once forded the old historic stream, and entered on the desert which lay beyond. Several days were occupied in skirting this sterile tract, as the Greeks frequently turned aside to chase the wild animals with which it abounded. But at length, after the endurance of much fatigue, aggravated by insufficient food, Pylæ was reached, at the entrance to the cultivated plains of Babylonia; and here the army halted for a few days' rest. In about thirty-three days they had marched more than six hundred miles, and were now within a hundred and twenty miles of Babylon, without having encountered any trace of an enemy.

On resuming their course, however, the invaders perceived symptoms of a large army in front. Cyrus therefore reviewed his own forces in a plain at midnight, and assured them that they would find the Persians very contemptible opponents, effective only in numbers and noise. They then continued their march, which, since they had crossed the Euphrates, had been directed along the eastern shore of that stream, the proximity of which was necessary for keeping up a due supply of water. Notwithstanding his confident words, it must have been with some feeling of anxiety that Cyrus moved forward to the encounter. Report had magnified the forces of the enemy to a total of 1,200,000 men; and, although this was probably an exaggeration, the numbers were undoubtedly large. In the camp of Cyrus himself, there had been signs of treason, and a feud between Clearchus the Spartan, and Menon, a Thessalian, had at one time nearly involved their respective followers in a combat of their own. The pretender accordingly marched along the river with considerable wariness, preserving his order of battle, so as to be ready for all emergencies. Clearchus had command of the right wing, Menon of the left, while Cyrus himself, with his Asiatics, occupied the centre. The enemy was not immediately encountered, but the invaders soon found themselves obstructed by a trench, thirty feet broad, and eighteen deep, which had been dug across the plain for a distance of forty-two miles from the Euphrates to the Median Wall. A narrow pass lay between the western end of this trench and the river; and Cyrus was astonished to find it undefended. Reassured by this fact, the army pushed on in loose array, and, on arriving at Cunaxa, learned that Artaxerxes was marching against them in full force.

The intelligence came at an inopportune moment, and in a manner sufficiently alarming. Cyrus, arguing from the extraordinary absence of opposition which had thus far marked his progress, had persuaded himself that his brother did not dare to risk a battle in the open plains, but would fall back on Persepolis or Ecbatana, where, owing to the mountainous nature of the adjacent country, it would be easier to make a stand. His men had therefore been suffered to pile their arms on the waggons, or to lay them across the beasts of burden.

Their military formation was for a time abandoned, while Cyrus himself, attended by a small escort, sat in a chariot, instead of remaining on horseback, as before. It was while matters were in this posture that a horseman rode up at full gallop from the direction towards which Cyrus was advancing. The steed of the new-comer was covered with foam and sweat, and the rider, as he advanced, called out to all whom he encountered, both in Persian and Greek, that the king was at hand, at the head of a vast army in order of battle.

BATTLE OF CUNAXA.

The first effect of this announcement was such as almost to produce a panic; but Cyrus, hastily buckling on his armour, and mounting his horse, gave orders which speedily restored confidence to the troops. On the right were the Greeks under Clearchus, who marshalled their line of battle with great promptitude, and were soon followed by the Asiatics in the centre, and by the rest of the Greeks, under Menon, on the left. For all these preparations there was sufficient time, as it was not until three or four hours later that the royal army was seen approaching. At length, a white cloud of dust arose upon the horizon. Then a darkness gathered beneath the wings of the great cloud, and presently sharp gleams of light broke forth, as the ranks of spears came into view from out the mass of the advancing hosts. The flash of brazen armour testified to the splendid equipments of these royal warriors, and the composition of the army became apparent in all its details as the steadily-advancing lines drew nearer. On the extreme left was a body of horsemen with white corselets; on the right were the infantry, carrying long wicker shields; and these were followed by a contingent of heavily-armed Egyptians, formed in square. Cavalry and archers, belonging to other subject nations, came next, and in front of the line were a hundred and fifty chariots provided with scythes, some of which were fixed aslant at the axle-trees, while others depended from the body of the vehicle.* The line stretched away to the east farther than the Greeks on the right could see, and covered more than twice the ground occupied by the army of Cyrus.

The first encounter with the royal troops was on the part of the Greeks commanded by Clearchus. When the enemy was within about six or seven hundred yards, the Hellenes began to sing their hymn of battle, at the same time striking their spears violently against their brazen shields. In the midst of this terrific noise, they rushed forward at a pace which soon quickened into a run. The whole effect was so alarming that the drivers of

* These minute and vivid details are preserved in the "Anabasis" of Xenophon, who accompanied the expedition.

EUXINE or BLACK SEA
SINOPE
THRACE
BYZANTIUM
CHRYSOPOLIS
HERACLEA
PAPHLAGONIA
COTYORA
TRAPEZUS
COLCHIANS
MACRONIANS
IBERIA
BITHYNIA
Mt. Olympus
Troas
MYSIA
PHRYGIA
GALATIA
PONTUS
SCYTHINI
ARMENIA
LYDIA
PHILADELPHIA
SYNNADA
SARDIS
Mt. Tmolus
TYRIÆUM
L. Tatta
CAPPADOCIA
L. Thospitis
Laodicea
CELÆNÆ
ICONIUM
TYANA
MOUNT TAURUS
CARIA
PISIDIA
CYBISTRA
DERBE
EUPHRATES RIVER
Charan
MESOPOTAMIA
ASSYRIA
LYCIA
PAMPHYLIA
Mt. Taurus
CILICIA
TARSUS
ISSUS
MYRIANDRUS
BEROEA (Chalybon)
NINEVEH
LARISSA
ANTIOCH
SYRIA
THAPSACUS
Caenae
RHODES
CYPRUS
CIRCESIUM (Phaliga)
THE GREAT SEA or MEDITERRANEAN
Palmyra
Damascus
CUNAXA
BABYLON
ALEXANDRIA
EGYPT
PALESTINE
ARABIAN DESERT
MAP of ASIA MINOR, showing the Expedition of CYRUS the YOUNGER, AND RETREAT of the TEN THOUSAND.
English Miles.
0 50 100 150

the chariots at once leaped down, and the troops behind them, catching the sudden panic, fled without striking a blow. The scythed chariots were dragged by the frightened horses into the mass of the fugitives, who received many injuries from the revolving blades, while the Greeks opened their ranks, and gave passage to such of the vehicles as charged forward. The retreating foe was pursued for two or three miles by the successful Hellenes, and in the meanwhile the battle went on in another part of the field with very different results. Notwithstanding the easy triumph of the division under Clearchus, Cyrus could not but perceive that his position was grave, if not critical. He feared that he would be outflanked by the superior numbers of his antagonists, and therefore considered that he had better bear down at once upon that section of the opposing line where his brother was stationed, and, by a sudden stroke of fortune, if that should be granted him, bring dismay upon the whole army. Artaxerxes was surrounded by a guard of six thousand Persians; the attendants upon Cyrus were not more than six hundred. Nevertheless, the larger number dispersed before the impetuous attack of the smaller, and the king was left without protection. Transported with the opportunity of gratifying his long-cherished hatred, Cyrus rushed towards his brother with the exclamation, "I see the man!"—pierced him through the corselet with a javelin, and even inflicted a second wound. But the pretender was now almost as little protected as Artaxerxes himself, for the greater number of his followers had ridden forward in pursuit of the king's body-guard. Immediately afterwards, a well-thrown dart struck Cyrus beneath the eye, and penetrated to the brain: he fell dead at his brother's feet, and eight of his friends perished devotedly on the body of their master.

The character of the younger Cyrus is highly eulogised by Xenophon. He was undoubtedly active and adventurous, and his abilities were far from contemptible. Justice, both in his private and his public conduct, was one of the virtues ascribed to him, and it is said that he never suffered the evil-doer to go unpunished, while his munificence to those who had deserved well, and to his personal friends, was equally conspicuous. It was the opinion of Xenophon that no one had ever secured the affections of a greater number of men, whether Greeks or others, than this aspirant to the throne of Persia; and undoubtedly the love of his friends was such as to argue the possession by himself of some excellent qualities. His character had a greater simplicity than was usual with Asiatic princes—a disposition probably acquired from his communication with the Greeks. He is said to have been fond of agricultural and horticultural labours, and to have worked with his own hands. Much of his leisure was given to hunting, and his life was free from that taint of effeminate indolence which so frequently disgraced the members of the Persian royal house. Yet the ferocity he exhibited towards his brother, and the treachery with which he plotted against his throne and even his existence, form a black shadow to the light of whatever virtues he may have possessed. Had he succeeded to power, it is not unlikely that, by his vigour, prudence, and extensive knowledge of men and of affairs, he might have delayed the fall of the Persian Empire for a generation; but it is scarcely possible that he should have done more.

The battle of Cunaxa (which was fought in the autumn of 401 B.C.) was practically determined by the fall of Cyrus; but a kind of desultory fighting continued until darkness separated the combatants. The Persian rebels fled with precipitation; but an attack on the Grecian camp, led by Tissaphernes, and afterwards joined by the king, was unattended by success. The main body of the royal troops then set forth in search of Clearchus and his men. By this time, the Spartan commander was returning from his pursuit of the Persian left, and the two hosts encountered one another, with the result that the forces of Artaxerxes were again routed, without daring to abide the Grecian charge. As the sun drew near the horizon, the broken masses of the Persians were seen scattered all over the plain, where, hotly chased by the victorious Europeans, they were unable to find any shelter from a peril which they had not the courage to face. The death of Cyrus was unknown to the Greeks until the following day, when one of their countrymen in the service of Artaxerxes appeared at the camp with a message requiring them to lay down their arms. The Hellenes contemptuously replied that the king himself might come and take them, if he felt strong enough to do so. This confident tone was wise under the circumstances; but an immediate retreat was necessary, as the satrap Ariæus, who was second in command under Cyrus, and had now succeeded to the sole direction of the army, declared that he should at once quit the country, without making any further attempt upon the Persian crown. The whole force accordingly set out during the night, after an interchange of oaths of fidelity, and the due observance of a solemn sacrifice.

It was no slight labour which confronted them. To avoid the desert, where they knew it would be

impossible to procure food, it became necessary to pursue a different and longer route, and it was much to be feared that the Persian cavalry, following closely on their rear, would prove a source of constant trouble. In the first instance, they turned to the east, in the hope of obtaining supplies; but their anticipations were disappointed. Tissaphernes then opened negotiations with them, and, by way of breaking down their stubbornness, furnished these hungry legions with a magnificent banquet. He professed the most friendly regard for the Greeks, and ultimately stated that he had the permission of the king to conduct them back to their own country. The offer was accepted, and, after a delay of twenty days, the Persian satrap, uniting his troops with those of Ariæus, led the way in the direction of the Tigris, followed by the Greeks at a distance of three miles. Having passed through the Median Wall, which extended a distance of seventy miles from the Euphrates to the Tigris, and was one hundred feet high, and twenty feet thick, they arrived, two days later, at the eastern stream, which was crossed by a bridge of boats. The march was then directed northwards, and at the Greater Zab, one of the affluents of the Tigris, they halted for three days. Here what had been suspected became manifest. The Persians under Tissaphernes were acting a traitorous part, and it ultimately appeared that Ariæus had been won over to the conspiracy. Tissaphernes still protested that he entertained the most cordial sentiments towards the Greeks; but some of their number were treacherously slain, and five of the generals were fettered, and sent off to the Persian court. Here four were speedily beheaded: Menon, who was the fifth, was put to death with torture, after a year's imprisonment.

The Greeks were now in a position of the most extreme danger. The surrounding country, besides being wholly unknown to them, was wild and rugged, and inhabited by a people who would naturally regard the European strangers as enemies. They were more than a thousand miles from their own part of the world; provisions were failing them, and their leaders, including Clearchus, had all been removed. On the night following the seizure of the generals, the Grecian hosts went supperless to their repose, as they had not heart enough to kindle fires for the cooking of such food as they possessed. Among them was the Athenian Xenophon, who had in earlier days been a pupil of Socrates, and who is now known to the world, not only as the principal hero of the famous retreat, but as an interesting and varied writer, and one of the chief authorities on the life and teachings of the great sage. Xenophon was a profound believer in the divine nature of dreams, which, in common with most of his contemporaries, he regarded as often conveying an occult wisdom to the sleeper. On this occasion he dreamed that a thunderbolt had struck his paternal house, and set it in flames. Waking soon after, he conceived that here was a plain intimation from heaven, pointing to the necessity of immediate action. He therefore rose, and, calling the principal officers together, exhorted them to take measures for their protection without another hour's delay. The result was that Xenophon himself was at once saluted general, and four others were subsequently joined with him in that office.

The first act of the Greeks, on recovering confidence in themselves, was to destroy their superfluous baggage, that they might push on with more rapidity. They then crossed the Greater Zab, and continued their march in a northerly direction, with the Tigris on their left. Tissaphernes was not very far in front, and another body of Persians attacked their rear-guard with missiles. Passing the deserted city of Larissa, girdled about with walls of immense height and thickness, and on the following day the city of Mespila, which was equally desolate, they traversed the country formerly rendered famous by the capital of the Assyrian Empire. It is in this region that Dr. Layard, M. Botta, and others, made their explorations into the ruins of ancient Nineveh; and it has even been supposed by Dr. Layard that both Larissa and Mespila — the former of which has been identified with Nimroud, and the latter with Kouyunjik—were at one time included within the circuit of Nineveh itself. But this is a point on which great difference of opinion exists, as the reader is aware from what has been already stated on an earlier page.*

The immediate object of the Greeks was to gain the mountainous country of the Carduchi, or Kurds, where they hoped to find a refuge from the Persian cavalry. In the meanwhile, they were closely pressed; and, to protect their rear-guard from the missiles of the enemy, they organised a band of fifty horse and two hundred Rhodian slingers, the latter of whom projected their leaden bullets to a considerable distance, and proved of the greatest service in repelling the assaults which had previously been so troublesome. On reaching the low range of hills forming the spurs of the Kurdistan mountains, the Persians delivered a series of final attacks, which, however, were productive of no

* See Chapter II., p. 28.

great loss. Rapidly moving from one eminence to another, they harassed the Greeks from a distance, and wounded several, but invariably fled on the approach of the heavy-armed troops. It appears from the testimony of Xenophon that the lash was frequently employed to urge these unwilling Orientals into any action whatever, even from afar; and it is therefore the less surprising that the comparatively small body of Greeks were able to maintain themselves against the multitudinous hosts of their enemy. Still, the presence of that enemy in such overwhelming force was a constant embarrassment to the fugitives; and when a Rhodian proposed to transport the army across the Tigris on inflated skins, it was found necessary to abandon the project, because of the large masses of cavalry which appeared upon the opposite bank. Had they been able to cross the great stream, they could have made their way into Asia Minor by a much shorter route than that which they were now pursuing; but the scheme was impracticable, and there was consequently no alternative but to cross the mountains in their front, and thus get into Armenia, where progress would be less difficult, and the disposition of the people possibly more friendly. From the Carduchians they experienced nothing but animosity. The first mountain-pass was undefended, but all the other defiles swarmed with savage warriors, who hurled great rocks upon the advancing lines of the army. The bows and arrows of these mountaineers were of such strength as to pierce the shields, breastplates, and helmets of the Greeks; and it was not until after seven days of unusual peril and difficulty that Xenophon and his companions reached the river Centrites, the boundary of Armenia. The passage of that stream was attended by great dangers; for not only was its depth considerable, and its current very rapid, but Tiribazus, the satrap of Armenia, stood on the opposite bank, with a large force of cavalry. At length, however, a practicable ford was discovered; the troops succeeded in getting across, and, on arriving at some villages, three days later, were addressed by Tiribazus, who promised that they should proceed unmolested through his satrapy, and help themselves to what supplies they needed, on the understanding that they did no injury to the people or their dwellings.

December had now arrived, and at that season of the year the cold in Armenia is intense. The mountain-ranges of Kurdistan had made an extraordinary change in the temperature; for as long as they were on the southern side of those eminences the heat was oppressive, while on the high table-land of Armenia, to the north winter was experienced in all its rigour. Storms were frequent, and snow fell to such a depth that on two occasions the Greeks were nearly buried as they lay about their bivouacs. As the Hellenes were always a lightly-clothed people, they were ill-prepared to meet such unusual severity. Many were seized with an extreme dejection, and sat down by the road-side to perish. This feeling spread to so alarming an extent that Xenophon, taking an axe, began to cleave wood for the purpose of making a fire—a manifestation of personal energy which aroused fresh spirit in his men. The position was made still more alarming by a report that Tiribazus, who was acting in concert with the savage tribes, intended to fall upon the weary troops, and cut them off among the defiles of the mountains. Nevertheless, they pushed on, and, after a five days' march, reached the eastern branch of the Euphrates, which they crossed without opposition. Their sufferings from the weather were now even greater than before. The plains in front were covered with deep snow, and a violent north wind seemed to breathe death upon them. Xenophon, in whom the feeling of religious belief was strongly developed, relates that the sharpness of the blast very sensibly abated after a sacrifice had been made to Boreas. Yet the snow continued to be an ever-present danger. It lay on the ground to the depth of a fathom, and the cold was so excessive that many of the slaves and beasts of burden succumbed to its terrible effects. The feet of some were frost-bitten; others were blinded by the dazzling drifts; but, as wood was plentiful, the soldiers were enabled to make fires for themselves when they encamped at night. A certain number, who were no longer capable of marching, were slaughtered by the enemy, who seized a portion of the baggage belonging to the rear-guard; yet, on the whole, the casualties were not many.

In the course of their march through Armenia, the Greeks came upon some extraordinary villages, such as are still to be seen in that part of the world. The houses were excavated in the earth itself, and the mouth resembled that of a well, though the space underneath was of sufficient width to be divided into various chambers. The descent was by means of ladders, and in the lower parts the Greeks found goats, sheep, cows, and fowls, with their young. Food was abundantly stored up in these subterranean abodes, and the inhabitants made a species of beer, which they sucked through long reeds. The Greeks were well received by the villagers, and took up their abode among them for a week, during which time they feasted on the best, and recovered greatly from their

fatigues. Resuming their march on the eighth day, they ascended the banks of the Phasis, which is considered to be the river now called the Araxes. A little further on, they again encountered hostile tribes, but, fighting their way through them, they crossed the Harpasus into the country of the Scythini, where, in a populous city, called Gymnias, they found a chieftain who promised to conduct them in five days within sight of the Euxine. This must have been early in 400 B.C. The spirits of the soldiers were greatly raised, and the first line of the vanguard, upon gaining the summit of a mountain, beheld once more the sunshine reflected from innumerable waves. Transported with joy, the wayworn men burst into loud cries of "The sea, the sea!" The rest of the army, hearing the noise, but unacquainted with its cause, supposed that they were again attacked by the enemy, and rushed in all haste to the assistance of their comrades. When, however, they also beheld the brightness and animation of the waters, which to them meant freedom, and reprieve from suffering and death, they embraced each other, and even their officers, with tears and exclamations of joy. Having erected a pile of stones as a kind of trophy, they dismissed their guide with many presents, and, again setting forward, entered the country of the Macronians, whom they found drawn up in order of battle on the wooded banks of a river. One of the soldiers in the Greek army, who had long been a slave at Athens, recognised in the people on the opposite bank his countrymen and relatives, for he was in truth a native of the territory to which he had thus unexpectedly returned. This man crossed the river, and made such good terms with the Macronians that they permitted the Ten Thousand to march through their land, provided them with food, and in all respects behaved in the most friendly manner. Thence the army passed through the dominion of the Colchians, where they experienced some opposition, though not of a very serious character. The worst incident occurring to them in this region resulted from the peculiar operation of the native honey, which threw several into a violent illness, having all the signs of insanity. The attack was followed by so much feebleness that, had the enemy come upon them in that condition, the disaster would have been irretrievable. No one died of the complaint, and the effect was not of long duration; but it was grave, and even alarming, while it lasted. Pliny has observed* that the honey of Heraclea, in Pontus, is sometimes collected from a flower which imparts to it a poisonous quality; and the same thing may have happened in the country of the Colchians.

The retreating army was now not far from one of the Grecian colonies which had been formed on the southern shores of the Euxine. In two days' further march they reached the city of Trapezus, or Trebizond, where, being once more among friends and fellow-countrymen, they rested for thirty days. Here also they offered up sacrifices to Jove the Preserver, Hercules the Conductor, and other deities; after which they celebrated those games which were always dear to the hearts of Greeks, and which were intimately associated with their religion. All were animated by a great desire to quit the land, and to pursue the rest of their journey by sea. Chirisophus, one of the principal commanders, accordingly volunteered to go to Byzantium, where he hoped to procure transports for the conveyance of the men. After a long time had elapsed without the return of this officer, it became evident that the march must be resumed, as supplies were running short. But a number of vessels had been collected, and by these the women, the sick, and the baggage were conveyed to Cerasus, while the effective soldiers proceeded on foot to the same place. Having arrived there, a halt of ten days was ordered, during which the army was mustered and reviewed, when, notwithstanding the hardships that had been undergone, it was found that there was still a total of more than 10,000 men. From Cerasus they proceeded by land to Cotyora, thence by sea to Sinope, and so to Heraclea and Calpe; at the last of which towns, Chirisophus, who had rejoined them at Sinope, expired. At Calpe the army once more landed, and then marched across Bithynia to Chrysopolis, situated immediately opposite Byzantium. It was not long before the narrow straits were crossed, and, in the latter part of 400 B.C., the Ten Thousand stood once more on European soil. The last stage of the journey was attended by a painful incident. Anaxibius, the Spartan admiral at Chrysopolis, had promised the Ten Thousand that, on reaching the opposite shore, he would furnish them with pay. He did nothing of the kind, however, but ordered them to proceed to the Thracian Chersonese—a distance of one hundred and fifty miles—and to support themselves on the march by plundering the villages. This breach of faith was discovered by the soldiers while they were still close to the walls of Byzantium, and, rushing back again into the city, the gates of which were open, owing to some of their number not having yet passed through, they threatened to sack the place.

* Natural History, Book XXI., chap. 13.

A panic fell upon the inhabitants; but Xenophon, with that quiet self-command which distinguished him, assembled his men in a large square, and persuaded them to refrain from an act which, besides being disgraceful in itself, would assuredly have called down a signal vengeance.

Five thousand of the army afterwards entered the service of a Thracian sovereign, who was glad to avail himself of their courage and military discipline. This prince, however, neglected to pay the men what he had promised, and they then engaged to serve the Lacedæmonians in a war with Tissaphernes and Pharnabazus. Their further actions will fall into the more general currents of Grecian history. Suffice it here to say that their main expedition—that which began under Cyrus, and terminated with the famous retreat—lasted fifteen months, from the summer of 401 B.C. to the autumn of the following year. For his action against Persia, then on friendly terms with the Athenians, and for his close association with the Lacedæmonians, Xenophon was soon afterwards banished from Athens, to which he had not returned since the expedition set out. Thenceforward he must be considered as politically a Spartan, and indeed he had always felt the highest admiration for the institutions and general character of the leading Peloponnesian race. At the close of his military life, he settled on an estate at Elis, where he diversified the cultivation of literature by a devotion to rural pursuits. After a residence in that part of Greece extending over at least twenty years, he was expelled by the Eleans—for what reason, is not precisely known. His sentence of banishment from Athens was ultimately repealed; but it does not appear that he ever returned to his native city. From Elis he went to Corinth, and is thought to have died there about 355 B.C., at more than ninety years of age. That he was regarded by his fellow-Athenians as a deserter from his country is unquestionable; but after his death his memory was honoured by all Greece, as that of the man to whom (whatever may have been his faults in other respects) was mainly attributable the rescue of the Ten Thousand from the very jaws of destruction.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

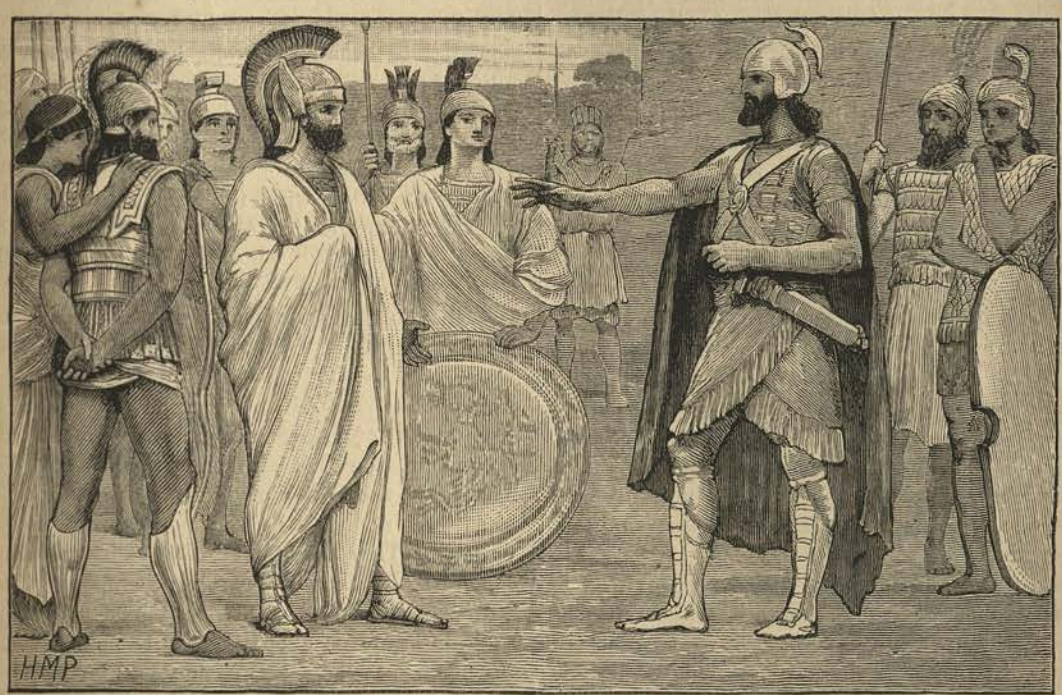
THE ATHENIAN AND SPARTAN RIVALRY.

War between Sparta and Elis—Arbitrary Conduct of the Spartans towards the Messenians—Designs of Lysander—Succession of Agesilaus to the Spartan Throne—Change in the Lacedæmonian Character—War in Asia Minor between the Spartans and Persians—Conon the Athenian the Ally of Persia—Agesilaus in Asia—Campaigns against Tissaphernes—Pharnabazus and Agesilaus—Naval Victory over the Spartans at Cnidus—Intrigues of Persia with the Grecian Cities Opposed to Sparta—Defeat and Death of Lysander—Discomfiture of Pausanias—Formation of a League against Sparta—Agesilaus in Bœotia—Fratricidal Combat at Coronea—Decline in the Spartan Fortunes—Re-erection of the Long Walls of Athens by Conon—Progress of the War on the Isthmus of Corinth—Iphicrates and his Light-armed Mercenaries—Negotiations of the Spartan Antalcidas with the Persians—Resumption of the Maritime War—Naval Successes of Thrasybulus—Seizure of Ægina by the Spartans—The Piræus surprised by Teleutias—Renewed Negotiations with Persia—The Peace of Antalcidas—Disgraceful Character of the Arrangement—Despotism of Sparta—Rivalry of Sparta and Athens—Olynthus and the Cities of Chalcidice—The Olynthian War—Treacherous Seizure of the Theban Cadmea by Spartan Troops—General Hatred of Sparta—Thebes and its Previous History.

By the battle of Ægospotami, in 405 B.C., the supremacy of Athens came to an end, and Sparta was again, as she had been in earlier times, the leading power in Greece. It was not long before she found an opportunity for asserting her newly-recovered prerogatives. Elis had given offence to the Spartans by siding with some of their enemies, and by excluding their representatives from the religious festivals and observances at Olympia. A democratical form of government had been established at Elis, and this was another circumstance which inclined the Spartans to look unfavourably on the little State which occupied the north-western side of the Peloponnesus. They accordingly made demands on Elis which they had little reason to believe would be recognised, and, on a refusal of compliance, ravaged the territory in two campaigns, and forced a humiliating peace on the vanquished. These events occurred in 400 B.C. and the following year: the commander of the expedition was King Agis, who had already distinguished himself in the Peloponnesian War. Emboldened by success, Sparta now turned her arms against the Messenians whom Athens had established at Naupactus, on

the Gulf of Corinth, and in the island of Cephallenia, after the close of the third Messenian War. Between the Messenians and the Spartans there had long been a deadly quarrel, and, as the former were now without any efficient protector, they experienced the full weight of Lacedæmonian vengeance. The counterpoise of Athens had been removed; no other Grecian State had yet arisen to take her place; and the iron despotism of Sparta seemed likely to become predominant over all Hellas.

set aside for one who would be willing to act in the interests of his patron. Owing to the unfortunate intrigue between Alcibiades and the wife of Agis, Lysander was enabled, with considerable plausibility, to throw doubts on the legitimacy of the boy. He therefore gave the support of his personal influence to Agesilaus, half-brother of the late king, and secured for him the reversion of the sceptre. No one could possess the distinctive qualities of a Spartan in a higher state of development than this prince. His hardihood and endurance,



INTERVIEW BETWEEN AGESILAUS AND PHARNABAZUS.

Even if the Spartans generally had been disposed to live on friendly terms with their neighbours, they would have been forced into action by the restless spirit and insatiable ambition of Lysander, the conqueror of Athens. After the conclusion of the Peloponnesian struggle, he conspired against the two reigning families of Sparta, hoping to obtain the regal office for himself; but, finding it impossible to procure the sanction of the oracles, notwithstanding the bribes by which he sought to corrupt them, he abandoned his design for the time being. On the death of Agis, however, in 398 B.C., he revived his scheme in a somewhat different form. It would evidently be no easy matter to seize the throne for himself; but Leotychides, the youthful son of Agis, might perhaps be

the extreme simplicity of his life, and the rigour of his military discipline, are recorded with the greatest admiration by Plutarch and other ancient authors. In spite of these austere virtues he had an agreeable and winning manner; but he was short of person, and lame in one leg. Immediately after his accession to power, he found himself confronted by a conspiracy of the poorer citizens, who sought to elevate one of their own number; but the plot was speedily suppressed, and Agesilaus was then free to turn his mind to other matters, especially to the extension of Lacedæmonian influence.

The cities which had belonged to the Attic dominion were at first ruled in the name of Sparta by Councils of Ten, organised by Lysander

soon after the great victory of Ægospotami. These Councils, as being too much under the direction of the general who appointed them, were afterwards removed, and the affairs of the cities were administered by Spartan harmosts, or governors, who acted with cruelty and selfishness. At the same time, some of the better elements of the old Lacedæmonian character were deteriorated by the large influx of gold and silver into the country—one of the consequences of the recent military triumphs. Rigid adherents of the ancient ways were violently incensed against Lysander for bringing immense quantities of the precious metals into Laconia, and for living himself after the manner of a wealthy man. They would have preferred to see the iron coinage of Lycurgus, which until then had been considered sufficient, retaining its place as the sole medium of exchange. But Sparta had now assumed the position of an Imperial Power, and a different currency became unavoidable, whatever the laws of Lycurgus might say to the contrary. The pride of the upper classes, however, was increased by riches, and the lower sank in proportion to a more miserable and degraded state. The masculine virtues of the people were in some degree weakened; yet the Lacedæmonian nature gained nothing in grace or softness by the change. Still, the effect was not immediate, and for a few years longer Sparta continued to tyrannise over the rest of Greece, by reason of her superior military strength.

Hostilities had for some time past existed in Asia Minor, where Tissaphernes, while retaining his own satrapy, had succeeded to that of the younger Cyrus as well. This zealous servant of the Persian monarchy knew that the Spartans had given assistance to the pretender, and he therefore launched his forces against the Ionian cities of the seaboard, which were at that time under Spartan protection. He was not, however, suffered to attack these commonwealths with impunity. A Spartan force under Thimbron was sent to their assistance in 399 B.C., and was speedily joined by a considerable proportion of Xenophon's Ten Thousand. Thimbron showed so little ability in his command that he was shortly afterwards superseded by Dercyllidas, who concluded a truce with Tissaphernes, that he might act with the greater freedom against Pharnabazus, whom he regarded as a personal enemy. Nine cities of Æolis, which was included in the satrapy of Pharnabazus, were reduced by him in eight days, and he retired for the winter into Bithynia. In the spring of 398 B.C., his operations were conducted in Thrace, where he built a wall across the Chersonese, to protect the Grecian colonies from the inroads of the northern barbarians; then, returning to Asia, he renewed the war against Tissaphernes and Pharnabazus. The forces of the two satraps, however, were so powerful that Dercyllidas found himself in a position of no little danger. The result was the conclusion of an armistice in 397 B.C., when it was agreed that the independence of the Greek cities in Asia Minor should be acknowledged, and the Spartan army be withdrawn, together with the governors appointed from Lacedæmon. By Pharnabazus it was never intended that the arrangement should be permanent. He immediately began to strengthen his forces, both military and naval, and to open negotiations with Conon, who, after his defeat at Ægospotami, had been living in Cyprus at the court of Evagoras, King of Salamis, one of the Greek colonies of that island. Gratified with the opportunity of again striking a blow at his old enemies, the Spartans, Conon accepted the command of a Persian fleet destined for renewed operations against Dercyllidas. But that commander had not given much more satisfaction than Thimbron, and Agesilaus now determined to take the direction of affairs into his own hands. He advanced great pretensions as a descendant of Agamemnon, who, as the chief captain of the Grecian army sent against Troy, had made the power of Hellas felt in Asia, or at least had done so in the popular belief of the Greeks. This doubtless gave additional importance to Agesilaus in the eyes of his own subjects; but when, in imitation of Agamemnon, he sought to inaugurate his expedition by sacrifices at Aulis, the Thebans, whose permission had not previously been asked, took offence, and expelled him and his followers by armed force.

Agesilaus was accompanied to Asia, in 396 B.C., by thirty Spartan citizens, who were to act as an advising council in the affairs of the war. Lysander was at the head of this body, and probably hoped to subordinate every one, including the king himself, to his own designs. But his arrogance at Ephesus caused such general dislike that Agesilaus, who was not disposed to act as his tool, subjected him to a number of rebuffs which at length resulted in his retirement to the Hellespont. Active operations were soon resumed, for the Persian sovereign refused to ratify the provisional arrangements which had been made by Dercyllidas and the two satraps. After making a pretence of attacking Tissaphernes, Agesilaus suddenly turned northward, and marched rapidly to Dascylium, in Phrygia, the city from which Pharnabazus conducted the government of his satrapy. He encountered no opposition until

close outside the town itself; but there the Persian cavalry proved too strong for him, and he retreated to Ephesus, where he spent the ensuing winter, making vast preparations for the next campaign. In the spring of 395 B.C. he marched on Sardis, while Tissaphernes, feeling doubtful as to the real destination of the enemy, spread his cavalry over the plain of the Mæander, where they could be of no service. The Persians were disastrously beaten, and Tissaphernes himself was assassinated, not long after, by the contrivance of the queen-mother, Parysatis, to whom he had given deadly offence by his opposition to her favourite son, Cyrus. His successor, Tithraustes, concluded an armistice with Agesilaus, who was induced, by a subsidy of thirty silver talents, to move his forces into the satrapy of Pharnabazus. The Spartan monarch was now appointed by the authorities at home to the command of the naval as well as of the land force. Conon, at the head of a large fleet, ultimately increased to eighty vessels, was causing great alarm at the scene of his operations on the coasts of Caria and Lycia, and the Lacedæmonian fleet under Pharax, though more numerous than that of the Athenian, found it prudent to retire to Rhodes, from which, however, it was speedily driven away by the islanders, who, detesting the Spartans, put themselves under the protection of Conon.

Agesilaus passed the winter in the vicinity of Dascylium, where his army found abundant support in the fertile country by which they were surrounded. They committed terrible devastations, however, and these were made the subject of reproaches by Pharnabazus at an interview which he had with Agesilaus and the thirty councillors, at a spot outside the city walls, early in 394 B.C. The details of this interview given by Xenophon show the character of Pharnabazus in a very favourable and pleasing light. In the latter part of the Peloponnesian War, he had assisted the Spartans when their fortunes seemed almost hopeless; and he now taxed them with forgetting this fact, and doing him and his satrapy the utmost injury they could. Agesilaus replied that towards himself personally they entertained the most friendly feelings, and that, if he would join their alliance, they would help him to set up an independent sovereignty. But Pharnabazus, rejecting the temptation, replied, "If the king should deprive me of my command, I would willingly become your ally; but so long as I am entrusted with the supreme power, expect from me nothing but war." The Spartan king appreciated the magnanimity of this reply, and promised to quit the territory of Pharnabazus at once, and to forbear from any further attacks on him.* He accordingly removed into the plains of Thebe, near the Gulf of Elæus, and Pharnabazus now shared his command with Conon, who, on paying a visit to Babylon, had obtained a large sum of money from Artaxerxes. A powerful fleet, composed partly of Phœnician and partly of Greek ships, was fitted out, and, in August 394 B.C., the Lacedæmonian fleet under Pisander sustained a crushing defeat off the peninsula of Cnidus, in Caria—a defeat which destroyed the maritime ascendancy of Sparta.

Previously to this action at Cnidus, Agesilaus had been hastily recalled home, in consequence of a new development of Grecian affairs which threatened great dangers to Sparta. Athens, Thebes, and Corinth had refused to join Agesilaus in his expedition against Persia, and Tithraustes, the new satrap of Ionia, perceived in this fact unmistakable evidence of the jealous feeling with which Sparta was regarded by some of the other States of Hellas. He therefore commissioned a Rhodian named Timocrates to visit the principal Grecian cities with a sum of fifty talents, to be employed in bribes. The chief success of this agent was at Thebes, which speedily became involved in hostilities with Lacedæmon. The cause of quarrel arose out of a dispute between the Opuntian Locrians and the Phocians, in which the Thebans took the side of the former, and the Spartans that of the latter. Lysander invaded Bœotia with a moderate force, and it was understood that the Spartan king, Pausanias, was to follow as soon as might be, at the head of a much larger army. The Bœotian city of Orchomenus joined the forces of Lysander, and the Thebans felt such alarm at the progress of events as to request the assistance of Athens, which was unhesitatingly granted. The good fortune of Lysander, however, was not of long duration. Without waiting for the reinforcements under Pausanias, he besieged the town of Haliartus, but was energetically attacked by the citizens, who made a sally at the very time that a body of Thebans arrived to their support. Defeat fell upon the Spartans, and Lysander himself was slain. Owing to the admirable character of the Lacedæmonian discipline, the invaders were able to rally, and repulse all attempts at pursuit; but they found it necessary to disband, and thus evade the hostility of the people. When Pausanias at length reached Bœotia, he found himself without support, and confronted by a large Athenian force. He begged a truce, that he might bury the bodies of those who had perished with Lysander—a request which was

* Hellenics, Book IV., chap. 1.

granted only on condition that he should at once quit Bœotia. As the discomfited Spartans retreated towards the Peloponnesus, the Thebans pursued them with blows and jibes, and it appeared as if the old Lacedæmonian spirit had quite departed. Pausanias was considered by his countrymen to have acted very ignobly on this occasion. Dreading the fate that awaited him, he fled to Tegea, in Arcadia, where he died, after having been condemned in his absence.

An alliance against Sparta was next formed by Thebes, Athens, Corinth, and Argos, who were soon joined by the Ozolian Locrians, the Eubœans, the Chalcidians of Thrace, the Acarnanians, the Ambraciots, and the Leucadians. Corinth was chosen by the confederates as their place of meeting, and the ensuing war is for this reason known as the Corinthian War, as that which immediately preceded it is called the Bœotian. It was in the spring of 394 B.C. that the new alliance was concluded, and the Lacedæmonian rulers saw at once that their supremacy over Greece must be maintained at the sword's point, if maintained at all. The dominion of Sparta had been characterized by corruption and tyranny—by rapacious exactions, and entire indifference to the feelings of others. Hence a store of hatred had been accumulating for some years, and the defeat of the Spartans in Bœotia was the signal for a combined attack. The gravity of the situation induced the Ephors to recall Agesilaus from Asia; but, before his arrival, the Lacedæmonians had anticipated the tactics of their enemies by an advance to the Isthmus, where, in the summer of 394 B.C., they gained a decisive victory in the neighbourhood of Corinth. At the same time, Agesilaus was making his way back to Greece through Thrace and Macedonia. The route he pursued was that formerly traversed by Xerxes; but whereas the Persian sovereign had taken six months to accomplish the distance, Agesilaus reached Greece by forced marches in thirty days. He was accompanied by several veterans of the Ten Thousand, with Xenophon at their head, and by other troops on whom he knew he could place the utmost reliance. But his disappointment at being obliged to leave Asia was extreme, for he had hoped to strike an effective blow at the power of the Persian Monarchy. At Amphipolis, on the Strymon, he received news of the great victory over the allies near Corinth; but the prospect of Greeks triumphing over Greeks filled him with grief and apprehension.

Making his way through the pass of Thermopylæ, where an eclipse of the sun suggested evil forebodings, Agesilaus reached the plain of Coronea, in Bœotia, where he found the confederates awaiting him. The battle which ensued was marked by varying fortunes. The left wing of the army of Agesilaus was completely shattered; but in all other parts of the line the Spartans were victorious, and the Thebans found themselves separated from their companions, who had by that time retreated. In endeavouring to rejoin the rest, they were furiously assailed by the Lacedæmonians, and a terrible conflict followed. Their shields and spears being broken, the troops encountered at close quarters, and slew one another with the dagger in the midst of a dreadful silence, broken occasionally by cries of mutual execration. Agesilaus himself was thrown down, trodden under foot, and seriously wounded; but the fifty men forming his body-guard were able, after desperate efforts, to save him from death. After a murderous struggle, the Thebans forced their way through the masses of their opponents; but the battle on the whole was to the advantage of Agesilaus, who shortly afterwards visited Delphi, where he dedicated to Apollo a tenth part of the booty he had acquired in Asia. He then returned to Sparta, and, as an acknowledgment of his great services, was made sole director of the national affairs.

At sea, the Athenians and their allies were predominant, and the results were extremely damaging to the Spartan cause. The islands and other territories ruled by Spartan governors rose in insurrection as soon as Conon and Pharnabazus arrived with their victorious fleet. With the exception of Abydos and the Thracian Chersonese, all these possessions delivered themselves from the Lacedæmonian despotism, and in the spring of 393 B.C. the allied vessels sailed for the Peloponnesus, where they ravaged the coast of Laconia, and seized the island of Cythera. They then departed for the Isthmus of Corinth, and Pharnabazus, after assuring the allies of his support, advanced to them a considerable sum of money. Funds were also granted, at the request of Conon, for rebuilding the fortifications of the Piræus, and the Long Walls of Athens. The Thebans assisted in this work, and the ramparts were rebuilt by the end of autumn. Athens was thus once more placed in a position of self-defence; but she was placed there mainly by the exertions of a Persian satrap, and, to the more thoughtful and scrupulous, such a conjunction seemed neither honourable nor of good omen. It would at one time have been deemed impossible; but the perpetual dissensions of the Greeks, which Agesilaus had the good feeling and the good sense to deplore, had opened the way for the foreigner, and had resulted in a political and

social state which foreshadowed the decline of Hellas. The Thebans also had been bitterly opposed to Athens, and had rejoiced at the humiliation of that city after the battle of Ægospotami. The destruction of the Athenian fortifications by the Spartans had been viewed by none with greater delight than by the citizens of Thebes; yet, in a few years' time, the posture of affairs had so altered, owing mainly to the tyranny of Sparta, that the Thebans now gave their labour to help the Athenians in re-erecting the very walls which had been then cast down. To receive the assistance of fellow-Greeks, however, was no reproach to the Athenians. It was only their indebtedness to Persian gold that should have reddened their cheeks with shame. Nevertheless, the general feeling was one of congratulation. On the completion of the walls, a splendid festival was given, at which Conon was hailed as a second Themistocles. His services had indeed been brilliant, and it is not to be denied that Athens now occupied a more favourable position than she had done since the great disasters of 405 and 404 B.C. But an alliance with Persia, in opposition to other Grecian States, was a fact which, though perhaps excusable under the pressure of circumstances, was hateful in itself, and calculated to precipitate the ruin it may have seemed to avert.

As the war progressed, the allies found it convenient to occupy Corinth and the passes of the Onean mountains, while the head-quarters of the Spartans were at Sicyon, from which they conducted expeditions into the Corinthian plain. The devastation thus committed was so excessive that many of the Corinthians became disaffected to their rulers, and desired to renew their old alliance with Sparta. But the sedition was crushed by the introduction of a body of Argives into the city, and by the massacre of large numbers who were believed to be conspiring for a peace. The malcontents, however, still remained in force, and in 392 B.C. they contrived to admit the Spartan commander at Sicyon within the walls which connected Corinth with Lechæum. A battle was fought in the narrow space enclosed between these walls, and the Spartans, being victorious, demolished a large part of the fortifications, after which they captured Sidus and Crommyon. These successes exposed Attica and Bœotia to attack, and great was the feeling of alarm which they created. A large force was accordingly despatched from Athens to Corinth, and the walls were speedily repaired. But, in the summer of 391 B.C., Agesilaus took Lechæum, and entirely destroyed the fortifications. Following up his success with the rapidity which usually marked his actions, Agesilaus so disposed his forces as to surround the city of Corinth, and to obtain a complete command over the Isthmus. The situation was now so grave that Thebes sent envoys to Agesilaus to arrange terms of peace; but the Spartan king, who could not forget the affront he had received at Aulis, rejected the proposals without even listening to them. The representatives of Athens also sought to terminate the contest, and obtained favourable terms, which the people refused to ratify, owing to the opposition of Argos and Corinth. Yet the peace-party was not without its representatives at Athens, and the orator Andocides made a speech in favour of bringing the war to a close, which has obtained a permanent position amongst the efforts of Greek rhetoric. For this exhortation he was banished; yet it is probable that he expressed the views of many beside himself, though not of the majority.

Shortly before matters had reached this stage Conon had organised a body of mercenaries, the command of whom was given to Iphicrates, an Athenian. They were all light troops, and, instead of wearing the cumbrous armour of most Athenian soldiers, were furnished with a linen corselet, and armed with swords and javelins different from those commonly in use. It was not long before these men proved themselves very efficient warriors. They were stationed at Corinth, and, on a certain occasion, in 391 B.C., Iphicrates sallied forth at their head, and attacked a division of six hundred Spartan soldiers, heavily armed, and arrayed in mail. The greater agility of the mercenaries enabled them to obtain a complete victory over the Lacedæmonians; and when Iphicrates had been reinforced by a body of Athenians, the discomfited troops fled to Lechæum, so hotly pursued and unrelentingly attacked by their conquerors that nearly the whole division was destroyed. Agesilaus received news of this disaster soon after the request of the Thebans that he would grant a peace. Matters were now placed on a very different footing. The Theban envoys no longer urged their petition, and Agesilaus began to fear that his allies would desert him. Iphicrates again issued forth, and, capturing a number of small towns in the vicinity of Corinth, liberated all the northern and eastern territory of that commonwealth. The Spartans were at length convinced of their inability to take the main position, and Corinth was not again attacked. Agesilaus, however, subdued Acarnania, on the western coast of Northern Greece, and in the following year Agesipolis invaded the Argive territory during a time of religious festival, but withdrew after several of his

men had been killed by lightning, which was regarded as a judgment on the invaders for the impiety of their conduct.

On the whole, the conduct of the war had been unfavourable to the Lacedæmonians, and, dreading the renewed power of the Athenians at sea, they determined, in 390 B.C., to re-open negotiations with Persia. Their envoy was Antalcidas, an able but cunning politician, who addressed himself to Tiribazus, the successor of Tithraustes in the satrapy of Ionia. His proposals were that Persia should interpose to bring about a general peace; but for the present he was unsuccessful. It was a part of this disgraceful scheme that the Grecian cities in Asia Minor should be abandoned to the Persian monarch; but the Athenians and their allies rejected such an arrangement with scorn. Tiribazus himself was well inclined to favour the Spartan project. He supplied his recent enemies with money for their fleet, and, seizing upon Conon in defiance of all international law, put him in prison as an enemy of the king. The fate of this honest and courageous man is very uncertain. It has been supposed that he was murdered in prison; but it is possible that he escaped, and was again protected by Evagoras in Cyprus. In either case, his public life came to an end with this act of treachery on the part of Tiribazus, who probably feared that, had he retained his liberty of action, he would have opened negotiations with Pharnabazus, and thus counteracted the intrigues of the Ionian satrap with the representative of Sparta. In the hope of bringing the Persian court to his own ideas of policy, Tiribazus departed for Susa, but his mission was without success, and during his absence his lieutenant, Struthas, carried on the war against the Lacedæmonians with considerable vigour. Thimbron, who, notwithstanding his incompetence, had again been entrusted with command, was defeated and slain by Struthas, while his army was completely dispersed by the clever tactics and skilled manœuvres of the Persian general.

The maritime war soon broke out afresh, and the Spartans sent a naval expedition against Rhodes, from which the popular party had expelled the aristocracy when the island revolted from Sparta a few years before. A fleet of twenty-seven ships was commanded by the Spartan Teleutias, who, while on his way from Cnidus, captured an Athenian squadron of ten triremes, under Philocrates. This augmentation of his force enabled Teleutias to re-establish the oligarchical exiles; but he was ultimately defeated by the Rhodians. The naval superiority of the Athenians was sufficiently threatened by the late events to suggest the necessity of special efforts for its restoration; and, in 389 B.C., a fleet was despatched to the Hellespont and the Bosphorus, under the directions of the aged Thrasybulus, who had acquired immortal renown by his restoration of the democracy at Athens, after the despotism of the Thirty Tyrants. On arriving at Lesbos, he took his men on shore, and defeated the Spartan governor; then, sailing down the coasts of Asia Minor, he levied contributions for the expedition to Rhodes. At Aspendus, in Pamphylia, some of his soldiers unfortunately irritated the people by their excesses, and, his naval camp being surprised in the night, Thrasybulus himself was killed. His successor in the command was Agyrrhius, a man of effeminate and profligate habits; and the Spartans now superseded Dercyllidas in the government of Abydos, and appointed Anaxibius in his stead. For a while, Anaxibius was very successful in intercepting Athenian merchantmen in the narrow straits of the Hellespont; but, on the arrival of Iphicrates, he was surprised among the mountain-ranges of Ida, and slain, while his forces took to flight. By this achievement, the Athenians again became masters of the Hellespont; but in 388 B.C. the Spartans established themselves in Ægina, and compelled the Athenians to withdraw their garrison from a fort which they had occupied on that island. The possession of Ægina enabled the Spartans to harass the Attic territory in various ways, and Teleutias, having been sent to the island to quiet the murmurs of the Spartan seamen, who had not received their pay, told them to prepare for an enterprise, the nature of which was to be kept secret. He had in truth formed the desperate project of attacking the Piræus, although he could reckon on no more than twelve triremes. He accordingly left the harbour of Ægina at nightfall, rowed quietly across the intervening waters, and at daybreak was within half a mile of the port of Athens. Waiting until it was fully light, he ran straight into the harbour, where, as no preparations had been made for repelling an attack which was always deemed impossible, considerable damage was inflicted. An alarm was immediately raised, but, before any troops could be brought to the spot, many of the Athenian triremes had been disabled. The merchant-ships were boarded and plundered; the shipmasters, tradesmen, and others were carried off as prisoners; and the smaller vessels were towed away, together with a few triremes. By the time the forces of Athens had arrived upon the spot, Teleutias was again at sea, laden with a magnificent booty. On his way back to Ægina, he fell in with several corn-ships and merchantmen,

THE ATTACK ON THE PIRÆUS.

which mistook his vessels for those of an Athenian squadron, and therefore fell readily into his hands. The enterprise might have seemed foolhardy before it was accomplished; but it proved a brilliant success, and Teleutias was now in possession of so large a sum that he was enabled to pay his seamen a month's wages.

Both sides were by this time so heartily tired of the war that the Spartan Antalcidas considered the opportunity a good one for renewing his negotiations with the Persian court. He therefore went to Susa in company with Tiribazus, and succeeded in persuading Artaxerxes to adopt the peace, and to threaten war against any who should reject it. In the spring of 387 B.C., Antalcidas and Tiribazus returned to the coasts of Asia Minor, provided with ample forces for imposing the desired arrangements on all who should presume to resist them. Athens and her allies felt that opposition was hopeless, and deputies from the Grecian States were therefore summoned to meet Tiribazus. It was a day of humiliation for Greece, as it was now evident that even the internal affairs of that country were at the disposal of the King of Persia. Tiribazus read to the assembled delegates a missive from Artaxerxes Mnemon, setting forth his royal will and pleasure as to the terms on which peace should be re-established among the several Hellenic States. The cities in Asia, and in the islands of Clazomenæ and Cyprus, were to belong to him; for this he considered just, though the inhabitants themselves were doubtless of a different opinion. The other Grecian cities were to be left independent, with the exception of Lemnos, Imbros, and Scyros, which were to remain with Athens, as of old. "Should any parties," continued Artaxerxes, "refuse to accept this peace, I will make war upon them, along with those who are of the same mind, both by land and sea, with ships and with money." These terms, on being reported by the deputies to their respective governments, were accepted without hesitation by all except the Thebans, who made a vain attempt at asserting their right to represent, not merely themselves, but the whole Bœotian Confederacy. This, however, was not allowed, and the Thebans ultimately gave way before a threat of renewed war from Agesilaus. The federal headship in Bœotia which Thebes had so long asserted was thus virtually given up, and Sparta imposed her despotic will upon a weaker Grecian State. The Peace of Antalcidas, as it is called, entirely reversed those arrangements which had been sanctioned by the understanding that is associated with the name of Callias. For more than sixty years, the Grecian colonies of Asia Minor had been practically independent, though it may be that the Persian monarch had never formally renounced his claim to them. But, by the dictated peace of 387 B.C., the Hellenic cities of western Asia were placed as completely under the sway of the Great King as they had ever been at any period of history. This disgraceful fact, and the equally discreditable circumstance that even on their own soil the Greeks had been compelled to sheathe their swords at the bidding of a foreign sovereign, were due to that fatal habit of disunion which was so deeply implanted in the Greek nature that no accumulation of disasters was sufficient to root it out.

As if to render the peace still more humiliating, its terms were inscribed on pillars at Olympia, and in the other sanctuaries of Hellas. Even among the Spartans, who were the main agents in bringing the arrangement to pass, there were some who had the grace to be ashamed. But these were few in number: the majority, it is to be feared, supported the political designs of their rulers, who were bent on restoring the Lacedæmonian supremacy, and saw no better way of effecting this object than by first destroying the independence of the other Greek States. The pretence was, that each Greek city was to enjoy its own autonomy, and to exercise no power over any other community. The real object was to expunge every rival dominion, in order that the supremacy of Sparta might be promoted. This was clearly shown shortly after the conclusion of the peace. The alliance between Argos and Corinth being now arbitrarily dissolved, the command of the isthmus was virtually in the hands of Sparta. Lacedæmonian garrisons were placed in the Bœotian cities of Orchomenus and Thespiæ, the oligarchical parties in which had always been supporters of the Spartan cause. The city of Platæa, destroyed by the Spartans during the Peloponnesian War, notwithstanding the splendid and truly national memories associated with its name, was now restored by the same people, but only to serve as a post for another garrison. This occurred in 386 B.C., and in 385 Mantinea was desolated by the Lacedæmonians under King Agesipolis, on the ground that the people had evinced a disposition to support the Argives in the late war, and had been remiss in furnishing contingents to Sparta. The unfortunate people were required to demolish a great portion of their town, and to restore it to the form of five villages out of which it had arisen. Over each of these villages was placed a separate government, of oligarchical composition, and, as the places were not permitted to be fortified, they were

entirely at the mercy of the superior power. At Phlius also, the Spartans interfered in a dictatorial fashion. Such was their conception of autonomy, and of the independence of the weaker States.

A renewed ascendancy at sea was another of the ambitious projects with which the Spartan rulers were now animated. Tribute was exacted from the smaller islands; but here the Lacedæmonians encountered a powerful opponent. The islands of the Ægean, over which Athens had long held sway, were much more inclined to the Attic than to the Peloponnesian predominance; and, as Athens had command of the sanctuary at Delos, she exercised a supreme control over the sacred treasures, which were lent out at interest to some of the islanders, and secured their fidelity. Thus it happened that the allegiance of the islands was divided between Athens and Sparta; but on the whole the position of the former was here superior to that of the latter. It was thought by some that, notwithstanding the antagonism of many years, an alliance might be formed between the two leading States of Greece for the liberation of the Asiatic Hellenes. Artaxerxes was now engaged in a war with the Cyprian prince, Evagoras, and was also giving great attention to the affairs of Egypt, where he hoped to restore the rule of Persia. To the orator Isocrates, and to some others, it appeared that the time was favourable for a combined attack on the great Asiatic monarchy, especially as the Greeks in that quarter of the world were exhibiting signs of disaffection. But there was in truth no solid ground for such a project, as the spirit of disunion among the Hellenic States had not been allayed by the bitter experiences of recent struggles. Moreover, events nearer home were about to assume a new development; for trouble was growing up in the peninsula of Chalcidice.

At a former period, the small maritime commonwealths of that country had placed themselves under the rule of Olynthus, to avoid subjugation by Athens. Olynthus and all the other Chalcidian towns owed fealty to Macedonia, and received in turn a measure of protection from that kingdom. The greatness of Macedonia was at a considerable height during the reigns of Perdiccas and his son Archelaus, in the fifth century B.C.; but since then the power of the State had declined, owing to internal disturbances, and the murder of the usurper Pausanias by Amyntas II., father of the celebrated Philip, completed the misfortunes of the land. Macedonia was invaded by the Illyrians, and Amyntas, shortly after obtaining possession of the throne, was compelled to fly. Being unable to defend the towns upon the coast, he made them over to Olynthus in 392 B.C., and the cities of Chalcidice and Lower Macedonia, occupied by populations that were either wholly or partly Hellenic, formed a confederacy for mutual protection, and for the maintenance of liberal principles in commerce and social usages. Two of the Chalcidian cities—Acanthus and Apollonia—refused to join this league, and were threatened by Olynthus with the application of force. The recalcitrant cities were the most powerful in that territory, with the exception of Olynthus itself, and if they had withheld from the league its very existence would have been imperilled, and the subjection of the Grecian communities to some alien tyranny probably have been the result. The menace of coercion had therefore the excuse of a plain necessity; but Acanthus and Apollonia still refused to submit, and in 383 B.C. despatched envoys to Sparta, to solicit the aid of that kingdom. The request was readily granted; the allies of Sparta were compelled to give their assistance, and it was resolved to march an army of 10,000 men to the Chalcidian peninsula. Early in the following year, a small detachment of this force, under the command of Eudamidas, was sent on at once, and arrived in time to assist the people of Acanthus and Apollonia in defending their cities. Eudamidas was soon joined by King Amyntas, who was now restored to his kingdom, and who turned against the very city to which he had himself confided the leadership of the other Chalcidian towns. Potidæa was persuaded to desert the league, and, although the Olynthians had the support of Thebes, their prospects were in the highest degree discouraging.

The war, which lasted four years, was distinguished at an early stage by an act of extraordinary treachery on the part of one of the Lacedæmonian commanders. The advanced guard under Eudamidas was followed in the summer of 382 B.C. by the main body of the forces under Phœbidas, the brother of Eudamidas; and on his way through Bœotia he halted not far from Thebes. Here he was visited by Leontiades, one of the polemarchs of that city, and by other members of the party which was inclined to the Spartan alliance. The religious festival of the Thesmophoria was being conducted at that time, and the Acropolis, or citadel of Thebes, called the Cadmea, after the mythical hero Cadmus, was given up to the uses of the women. The temptation of such an opportunity was not to be resisted by two such men as Phœbidas and Leontiades, and it was agreed that the Cadmea should be seized, in defiance of all right and decency. In the silence

of a hot summer afternoon, when the streets were empty, and the thoughts of all men were given to the religious observances of the season, Leontiades conducted the Spartan troops towards the citadel, which, being occupied entirely by women, was incapable of defence. The women were detained as hostages; the other polemarch, Ismenias, who was known to be opposed to the Lacedæmonian policy, was put to death, after a trial before a packed court, on a charge of receiving money from Persia, and causing the recent war; and three hundred of the principal citizens, struck with terror at the seizure of their city, fled to Athens, as the only place of refuge which was capable of giving them protection. There can be no reasonable doubt that these actions had been sanctioned by the Spartan rulers; for, although Phœbidas was fined and dismissed, when the general indignation of Greece made some such judgment imperative, Agesilaus defended his conduct, and he was subsequently re-appointed to his command. Had there been any real displeasure at such a breach of faith, the Cadmea would have been restored; but, on the contrary, the Spartans still retained possession of this important post, and the Thebans were compelled to march against Olynthus as the enforced allies of Lacedæmon. The war, during the course of which Teleutias and Agesipolis lost their lives, came to a conclusion in 379 B.C., when Olynthus was obliged to succumb. The confederacy was then dissolved; the cities of Chalcidice were brought under the influence of Sparta, and the maritime towns of Macedonia were again added to the dominions of Amyntas. Phlius, which had been besieged by Agesilaus, was taken about the same time, and a government, nominated by the Spartan king, was appointed in the interests of the exiled oligarchs, who were restored.

The power of the Spartans was now supreme over the greater part of Greece; but it was a power hated by those whom it coerced, and who were for the time incapable of resisting its insolent decrees. The Lacedæmonian troops remained at Thebes until after the close of the Olynthian war, and it was then seen beyond any possibility of question that the principle of autonomy had been brought forward simply as a cover to the most despotic projects. Even before the war just described, Sparta had given great offence to all democratic Greeks by concluding an alliance with Dionysius, the tyrant of Syracuse. The feeling with respect to this matter was so general and vehement that, at the Olympic festival of 384 B.C., a popular demonstration was made in condemnation of the unnatural league. Sparta, however, cared little for such expressions of opinion, and after the fall of Olynthus her arrogance knew no bounds. But retribution was soon to follow on the footsteps of her misdeeds, and the blows that shattered her were to come principally from the city which she had occupied by an act of the greatest villany. Up to the date we have now reached, Thebes has not occupied a very important position in Greek history; yet it was an ancient city, and, according to old belief, was founded by the Phœnicians under Cadmus. The Thebans took no part in the Trojan war; but, in the age of Homer, their city appears to have been in a flourishing condition, and to have had seven gates in the circuit of its walls. In early times, the government of Thebes was monarchical, and the misfortunes of Laius, Œdipus, Polynices, and Eteocles, are famous in poetry and legend. From time to time in later ages, the course of Theban history crosses the main currents of the Grecian annals; but it was not until the period we are approaching that Thebes became a leading power in Hellas, and the scene of interesting events.

The people of Bœotia were regarded by most of the other Greeks as indolent, heavy, and sluggish. The epithet "Theban pig" became proverbial, in the sense of a man remarkable for stupidity; and, by an act of great injustice, the term Bœotian is to the present day an accepted synonym for a fool. The Thebans may have had less vivacity and less brilliance than the Athenians; but they produced some celebrated men, and the whole course of Grecian history presents us with no hero so entirely great, or so characterised by moral grandeur, as Epaminondas, whose achievements yet lie before us. In very ancient days, the inhabitants of Thebes were distinguished by fierceness and passion; but this disposition seems to have been modified in later times, and at all periods the women were celebrated for their gentleness, no less than for their beauty. The territory subject to Thebes, and which was called the Thebais, lay between the eastern coast of Lake Copaïs and the ranges of Mount Cithæron, and extended as far north as the river Cephissus. Thebes was the principal of the fourteen Confederate States of Bœotia, and was dominant over a considerable number of inferior towns, although it was not, in any proper sense of the term, the Bœotian capital. Such was the city now destined to acquire a predominance in Greece —a predominance lasting, indeed, but a short time, yet distinguished by many events of interest and importance.

CHAPTER XL.

THE THEBAN SUPREMACY.

Oppression of Thebes by the Spartans—Pelopidas and Epaminondas—Conspiracy against the Oligarchical Party in Thebes—Assassination of the Polemarchs—Progress of the Revolution—Surrender of the Cadmea by the Lacedæmonians—Sparta, Athens, and Thebes—Renewal of War—Formation by Athens of a New Confederacy—The Sacred Band of Thebes—Education and Training of Epaminondas—Expeditions of the Spartans into Bœotia—Athenian Successes at Sea—Rising Fortunes of the Thebans—Jealousy between Thebes and Athens—Progress of the War—Renewed Appeal of Lacedæmon to Persia—Conclusion of Peace, without the Concurrence of Thebes—Invasion of Bœotia by the Spartans—Battle of Leuctra—Another Spartan Army sent into Bœotia—Jason of Pheræ in Thessaly—Bœotia evacuated by the Spartans—Decline of the Lacedæmonian Spirit—Formation of an Arcadian Confederacy—First Invasion of the Peloponnesus by Epaminondas—Consternation at Sparta—Restoration of the Messenian State—Alliance between Athens and Sparta—Second Invasion of the Peloponnesus by Epaminondas—Lycomedes of Mantinea—Invasion of Thessaly by Pelopidas—Defeat of the Arcadians by the Spartans—Third Invasion of the Peloponnesus by Epaminondas—Persia gives her Sanction to the Theban Supremacy—Seizure of Pelopidas and Ismenias by Alexander of Pheræ—Their Rescue by Epaminondas—Alliance between Athens and Arcadia—Attempt of Thebes to found a Navy—Death of Pelopidas in Thessaly—War between Elis and Arcadia—Fourth and Last Invasion of the Peloponnesus by Epaminondas—Retreat of the Thebans from Sparta—Battle of Mantinea—Death and Character of Epaminondas—Last Actions of Agesilaus.

THEBES was not liberated from the Lacedæmonian tyranny without a strenuous effort on the part of her citizens. Combination against the strangers was not easy in the place itself, because it could always be repressed by military force; but, as already mentioned, a number of Thebans had found refuge at Athens, and plans of freedom could be readily concerted beneath the ægis of that republic. One of these exiles was a young man named Pelopidas, descended from an illustrious family, and himself the possessor of great wealth, a large portion of which he devoted to the wants of his needy fellow-exiles. He was a man of generous and humane disposition, and in his retirement he brooded over the wrongs of his native city, and revolved in his mind the likeliest methods of redressing them. Among his friends was Epaminondas, a descendant from the ancient kings of Bœotia, but one who was compelled by circumstances to live in poverty and humbleness. The mutual attachment of these two great soldiers and statesmen is one of the noblest facts of history. It was cemented on the battle-field, when Epaminondas defended Pelopidas from the assaults of the enemy, as he lay prostrate on the earth; and it lasted until the death of the latter in the thick of mortal combat. Pelopidas, who was younger than his friend, desired to share his riches with Epaminondas, and, finding his persuasions fruitless, resolved to live with equal simplicity and self-denial. What brought them still closer together was the project which Pelopidas formed, and eventually carried out, for the delivery of Thebes from the presence of the Spartans, and for which, in 379 B.C., the people seemed ripe.

Having matured his plans, Pelopidas entered into a secret correspondence with his friends at Thebes. The dominant faction, which belonged to the aristocracy, was supported by a garrison of 1,500 Spartans, and it was therefore necessary to proceed with care. One of the conspirators in the city itself, however, was Phyllidas, secretary to the polemarchs, who were military commanders vested with the chief administrative authority. Assured of the earnest support of this official, and also that of another important person named Charon, Pelopidas and six fellow-exiles arrived from Athens in the latter part of the year, disguised as rustics, and established themselves in the residence of Charon, without their presence being known. Two of the polemarchs, Archias and Philippus, were then invited to a supper at the house of Phyllidas, where, it was promised, they should meet some women of unusual beauty. On the evening appointed, the secretary took care to ply the polemarchs liberally with wine, and they were more than half-intoxicated when a messenger from Athens arrived with a letter for Archias, which in truth revealed the whole plot. Yet, although the polemarchs had already received a vague intimation that mischief was on foot, and had sent for Charon to explain some suspicious circumstances, Archias declined to read the letter at the moment, but, thrusting it beneath the pillow of his couch, exclaimed, "Serious business to-morrow!" For him there was to be no to-morrow. The conspirators, disguised as women, and closely veiled, were shortly afterwards introduced, and the polemarchs, on approaching them, were despatched by concealed daggers. Pelopidas and his companions then went to the house of the third ruler, Leontiades, whom they slew in the presence of his wife, though not until he had inflicted a mortal

wound on one of the conspirators. The gaol was next broken open, and the prisoners were supplied with arms.

Epaminondas had refused to be concerned in this plot, even at the solicitation of his friend Pelopidas, because, to his pure and lofty nature, there was something abhorrent in the treachery and bloodshed with which it was to be effected. But, the revolution having now taken the form of open warfare, he no longer hesitated to join the patriotic ranks. The movement spread with extra-

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ordinary rapidity; a meeting of citizens in the market-place—the first that had occurred for more than three years — showed how great was the popular delight at the restoration of liberty; the older form of government was again established; and Pelopidas, Charon, and a conspirator named Mellon, were unanimously appointed Bœotarchs—that is to say, representatives of the city of Thebes, considered as forming part of the Bœotian Confederacy. An Athenian force was then sent to Thebes, to help the people in their final contest with the Lacedæmonian garrison, which still occupied the Cadmea. As the patriotic army was about to assault the citadel, the Spartans capitulated, and were allowed, by a great stretch of generosity, considering the manner in which they had gained possession of the place, to march out with the honours of war. Unfortunately, it must be added that the Theban cause was discredited by some acts of extreme severity towards native adherents of the Lacedæmonians. But it should in fairness be recollected that the city had endured nearly four years of tyranny and humiliation, and that few revolutions have been effected without the commission of acts which a cooler judgment deplores and condemns.

Sparta was not likely to accept the disgrace of what had occurred at Thebes, without making some attempt to vindicate her power. Of the three commanders who surrendered at the Cadmea, two were put to death by the judgment of their countrymen, and the other was fined and driven forth. An expedition against Thebes was commenced, and envoys were despatched to Athens to demand reparation for the injury done to Sparta by the presence of an Athenian contingent at Thebes during the latter days of the revolution. Such was the miserable subjection of Athens to the will of her rival, that one of the generals was executed, while his coadjutor, flying to a place of safety, was condemned in his absence to banishment. A Spartan force being now in Bœotia, the Thebans bribed its commander, Sphodrias,

to invade Attica, as a means of forcing the Athenians into a position of hostility towards Lacedæmon. Sphodrias mismanaged his commission, and was obliged to retire; but he had stayed long enough to inflict an amount of damage on the land which exasperated the authorities at Athens into declaring war against Sparta, and concluding an alliance with Thebes. Thus, in 378 B.C., the two chief Grecian States were once more face to face, and the rest of Hellas

was violently excited by the prospects of the struggle. A new confederation of independent cities was formed by Athens on the basis of that of Delos, but with modifications, leaving greater freedom to the individual members, and excluding any revival of the Athenian ascendency which in former times had led to so much discontent. After a time, seventy cities joined this league, and their representatives met at Athens, to raise a common fund for the creation of a naval force.

Preparations for war were made on an extensive scale both by the Athenians and the Thebans, and the latter instituted the famous military companionship known as the Sacred Band, which consisted of three hundred heavy-armed soldiers, chosen from the best families, and bound together by ties of the most endearing friendship. The special duty of the Sacred Band was to defend the Cadmea from assault; but it was sometimes engaged in other services. Epaminondas now came prominently forward, as a man well qualified to advise his fellow-Thebans in the difficult circumstances that were approaching; though no one could have anticipated how great a captain and noble a ruler he was destined to be. Both in mind and body, Nature seemed to have marked out Epaminondas for a hero. He had trained himself in all those physical accomplishments which fit a man for the active life of a soldier, without pushing the exercises of the gymnasium to the absurd and pernicious lengths which thoughtful observers deplored. At the same time, his intellect was richly cultivated. Not to speak of music and dancing, which with the Greeks had a serious use and application, he was deeply instructed in philosophy, and seems to have combined the practical ideas of Socrates

with the mystical abstractions of Pythagoras The Socratic part of his education came from two disciples of the great master,—Simmias, a Theban, and Spintharus, a native of Tarentum, in Magna Græcia; the Pythagorean element was due to Lysis, a Tarentine exile living at Thebes. From the happy union of these distinct systems, Epaminondas derived a mind of perfect balance, an equable temper, a humane and liberal disposition, a lofty conception of the world and of the soul of man, and a superiority to mean and despicable motives. Had he lived in more peaceful times, he might have been a philosopher; as it was, he threw himself into the field of war, and aided his friend Pelopidas, the newly-appointed Bœotarch, in organising the military resources of the country.

In the summer of 378 B.C. Agesilaus, at the head of a large Spartan army, ravaged Bœotia up to the gates of Thebes, in a series of desultory incursions, to which the Theban forces under Pelopidas, and the Athenians under Chabrias, could offer no effectual hindrance. The same kind of expedition, in which care was taken to avoid as far as possible any general engagement, was repeated in the summer of the following year, when Agesilaus once more assumed the command; but, on his homeward march, he sustained an injury to the leg, which prevented his again leading the troops in 376 B.C. His place was then supplied by his colleague in the royal office, Cleombrotus, who exhibited so little ability and enterprise that he speedily retreated from the passes of Cithæron, which the Thebans had seized, and had rendered too strong to be easily forced. During the same year, a Lacedæmonian fleet was defeated by an Athenian fleet off the island of Naxos, and shortly afterwards several victories were gained in the Ionian Sea by Timotheus, the son of Conon, who in 375 B.C. brought over to the Athenian alliance many of the islanders, and of the communities inhabiting the western coasts of Greece and Epirus. The mastery of both seas—the Ægean and the Ionian—was thus once more in the hands of the Athenians; but this very fact created a feeling of irritation on the part of the Thebans, who refused to comply with the demands of Athens for larger contributions from the members of the confederacy. Thebes was in truth making such rapid strides in power and influence that she was rather inclined to depend upon herself than submit to any corporate control. With the exception of Orchomenos, all the cities of Bœotia had succumbed to Thebes by the latter end of 374 B.C.; and the exception was due in great measure to the presence of Spartans in the city. In the previous year, Pelopidas had failed in an expedition against Orchomenos, but had beaten a Spartan force in the neighbourhood of Tegyra, with which he accidentally fell in. The Lacedæmonians were nearly twice as numerous as the Thebans; yet Pelopidas accepted the combat with a reliance on success which the event fully justified.

Emboldened by their good fortune, the Thebans invaded Phocis in the course of 374 B.C., to punish the people of that State for the assistance they had given Sparta. This offended the Athenians, who could not forget that Phocis had in former times been their ally. The little commonwealth was, indeed, saved from subjugation by the interposition of the Lacedæmonians; yet the displeasure of Athens was not appeased. She made a separate peace with Sparta; but the hasty and disloyal understanding was shattered almost immediately afterwards by the interference of the Athenian admiral, Timotheus, in the affairs of Zacynthus, for which the Spartans in vain demanded satisfaction. On the resumption of the war, the Spartans besieged Corcyra in 373 B.C., and reduced it to great straits, but were ultimately compelled to retire, owing to a sally of the garrison, and the approach of an Athenian fleet under Iphicrates, Chabrias, and Callistratus. Ten triremes, sent by Dionysius of Syracuse to the assistance of Sparta, were captured by Iphicrates, who then sailed for the coast of Acarnania, and afterwards for the western shores of the Peloponnesus, which he ravaged without resistance. The power of Lacedæmon had now sunk so low that the Ephors, as before, looked to Persia as a possible friend in their extremity. With this hope, they again despatched Antalcidas to Sardis, in 372 B.C.; and about the same time the Athenians once more opened negotiations for a peace with Sparta. The Thebans had given offence even to Athens by destroying the city of Platæa, which had been restored by Sparta a few years earlier as a post for one of those garrisons by which she hoped to overawe the whole of Bœotia. The greater number of the allies of Thebes were also desirous of bringing hostilities to a close, and a congress assembled at Lacedæmon in the spring of 371 B.C.

On this occasion, Thebes was represented by Epaminondas, who, being a master of eloquence (unlike his fellow-citizens generally), defended in a very impressive speech his right to sign in the name of the Bœotian Confederacy. The very object of the war, so far as Thebes was concerned, was to

maintain this right, which had always been asserted by its citizens; and it was equally the object of Sparta to resist such a claim Agesilaus was highly indignant at the tone adopted by Epaminondas, now one of the polemarchs of his native State; and, starting up abruptly, he exclaimed, "Will you, or will you not, leave each Bœotian city independent?" To this, Epaminondas replied by simply asking, "Will *you* leave each of the Laconian cities independent?" The whole gist of his speech had been to show that Thebes had the same right to dominate in Bœotia that Sparta had to dominate in Laconia—namely, the right of superior force and aptitude; and the argument was too pointed not to be exasperating. Feeling himself incapable of meeting it, yet still resolved not to admit the demands of Epaminondas, Agesilaus simply directed that the name of Thebes should be struck out of the treaty; and peace was concluded without the signature of the important city which Epaminondas represented. The agreement of 371 B.C. is called the Peace of Callias, after the Athenian ambassador, but must not be confounded with the earlier understanding of 449 B.C. (also associated with a person of the name of Callias), by which it is thought that Athens and Persia composed their differences. It was now decided that the Spartan governors and garrisons should be withdrawn from the cities where they had for several years been stationed, and that the armaments on both sides should be disbanded. Athens, Sparta, and the smaller States, were content: Thebes alone was made the victim.

Orders were at once sent to the Spartan Cleombrotus, whose army was then in Phocis, to invade Bœotia. Marching by a circuitous route, which had been left unguarded because of its supposed impracticability, Cleombrotus surprised the city of Creusis, on the Crissæan Gulf, seized twelve triremes which lay in the harbour, and then, passing through the territory of Thespiæ, reached the plain of Leuctra, where he drew up his troops. Meanwhile, Epaminondas had taken his station in a narrow defile near Coronea, believing that the enemy would pass that way; but, finding that Cleombrotus had penetrated into Bœotia by another road, he followed him to Leuctra, and prepared for action. The spirits of the Thebans generally were much cast down by the successful invasion of Bœotia, and by certain evil omens which, in the superstitious belief of the time, had accompanied their own march. Some of the generals were for returning to Thebes, and there enduring a siege; but Epaminondas and Pelopidas resisted such advice, and the soldiers were fortunately encouraged at the same moment by portents of a more favourable nature. The chief command was in the hands of Epaminondas, and he now for the first time gave evidence of the remarkable military genius which he possessed. Departing from the usual practice of Grecian armies up to that date, he concentrated heavy masses of troops on a single point of the opposing force, instead of attacking all along the line. These are the tactics which in modern days have been adopted by Napoleon in land warfare, and by Nelson at sea. With Epaminondas, the method seems to have been a happy inspiration, unless it was in some degree suggested by the heavy Bœotian phalanx which, at Delium, inflicted a severe defeat on the Athenians. At the battle of Leuctra, Epaminondas threw his left wing into a column fifty deep (which was more than its width in front), and sent it down at the charge against the Spartan right, where Cleombrotus was stationed with the flower of his army, forming a line only twelve deep. The Sacred Band constituted the van of the Theban left, with Pelopidas at their head; and the onset of the whole column was overwhelming. The Spartan right was shattered by the collision; Cleombrotus was mortally wounded; several of his officers were slain, and large numbers of the soldiers were stretched upon the earth. The Theban centre and right were not engaged at all. They were kept ready for action, should their services be required; but the battle was decided by the rapid and powerful movement of the heavy column led by Pelopidas. The Spartan loss was serious, and many of the allies of Cleombrotus fought with so much languor and indifference as to betray how little their hearts were in the cause. Of the Thebans themselves, very few were killed.

Such were the results of this famous battle, which was gained within three weeks of the peace from which Thebes had been so unjustly and insolently excluded. The authorities at Sparta affected a complete indifference to the disaster, and all signs of public mourning were prohibited. Yet they lost no time in organising another army, for the rescue of what remained of the first. This second force comprised all the available resources of the country, even including men of advanced years. The allies also sent contingents, and the whole army was transported by sea from Corinth to Creusis, in Bœotia, where it disembarked. The command was given to Archidamus, son of Agesilaus, and much was hoped from one who came of such illustrious parentage. Dreading the consequences of the war, whichever side prevailed, the Athenians refused to take any part in the struggle, and sought to localise its effects by

calling on the other parties to the recent treaty to remain neutral, and to form a new and pacific league upon the terms of the Peace of Antalcidas-so as to prevent either belligerent obtaining a supremacy over Greece. Most of the Peloponnesian States joined the proposed league; but the Eleans held back, that they might not relinquish their sovereignty over the small towns in their neighbourhood. Before this new condition could be established, however, the allies of Sparta, as already stated, had sent a proportion of soldiers to join the army of Archidamus, and Thebes was glad to obtain what assistance she could. She found an influential supporter in Thessaly, where a man of great power and genius had raised himself to supreme dominion.

Jason, a native of Pheræ, one of the Thessalian cities, had acquired the position of Tagus, or Generalissimo, of all Thessaly. He even exercised some control over Macedonia, and was supposed to contemplate extending his sway over the whole of Greece. To this potentate the Thebans appealed for help, and Jason readily granted it. Moving with the utmost expedition, he speedily reached the Theban camp, where he advised Epaminondas and the other generals to refrain from a renewed attack on the Spartans, and to propose terms of accommodation. By his mediation, a truce was settled, in accordance with which the invaders were allowed to leave Bœotia without further molestation. The Spartans were so glad to escape that they hurriedly departed in the night, as if fearing another defeat, and, proceeding first to Creusis, made their way thence by a rocky and difficult coast-road to Ægosthena, in Megaris, where they came upon the army of Archidamus, which had already fallen back, and was now disbanded. The reputation of Sparta as a military nation was hopelessly damaged by this series of events. The old martial spirit, which, however cruel and relentless in itself, had undoubtedly done much to secure the predominance of the State, had now greatly declined. Public feeling was so clearly opposed to visiting on the survivors of the battle of Leuctra all the penalties which the law enjoined—namely, those attaching to civil infamy—that they were only suspended for a time from the enjoyment of their rights. It may have been a gain on the grounds of humanity that duties should no longer be so rigorously enforced; but the change indicated a diminution of the conquering genius, and it was as a conquering State that Sparta had hitherto exercised control over Greece. Her ascendancy was now confined to the Peloponnesus, and even there it was circumscribed. The Thebans were manifestly the rising power, and their alliance was sought by the Phocians, Eubœans, Locrians, Malians, and Heracleots. The people of Orchomenos were forced to make their submission, and those of Thespiæ were expelled from Bœotia, as enemies of the confederation. The former would have been punished for their adherence to Sparta by the destruction of their town, and the selling of themselves into slavery, but for the noble clemency of Epaminondas.

The rival to be chiefly apprehended by Thebes was Jason of Pheræ, who was thought to contemplate an attack upon the Southern States of Greece; but in 370 B.C. this energetic despot was slain as he was sitting in public, giving audience to the suitors who came to submit their cases to him. Thebes had now little to fear. Athens, though somewhat unfriendly in her disposition to the new Bœotian power, was not inclined to attack it, and Sparta had no longer the means of offence. A few months after the battle of Leuctra, an Arcadian confederacy was established in the centre of the Peloponnesus, which acted as a check upon Lacedæmon. Mantinea, which had been degraded and broken up by the Spartans fifteen years before, was now rebuilt, and the Arcadians, taking courage from this assertion of independence, resolved to form a Federal State, which they thought would have the support of all opposed to Spartan arrogance. The idea was favoured by most of the Arcadians, but some few cities held aloof, out of jealousy of Mantinea. It was not to be expected that such a project would be quietly sanctioned by Sparta, and accordingly Agesilaus made a military demonstration against Mantinea, which resulted in nothing more than desultory spoliation. The expedition of the Lacedæmonian king gave Epaminondas the opportunity he wanted for interfering in the affairs of the Peloponnesus. He therefore opened communications with the descendants of those Messenians who had been exiled by Sparta when she conquered the territory three centuries before. These children of an expatriated race were to be found dispersed among various Hellenic colonies; but it was a matter of no difficulty to bring large numbers of them together when Epaminondas, towards the latter end of 370 B.C., was on his march to Arcadia. By the time the Theban general had reached the neighbourhood of Mantinea, he was at the head of an army to which the Argives and Eleans had furnished large contingents. The chief command was vested in the hands of Epaminondas himself, though the other Bœotarchs were associated with him. The forces were of a somewhat motley

character; but the Theban bands had been brought into so high a state of efficiency by the discipline of their principal leader that they alone were capable of giving solidity and force to the whole mass. The auxiliaries from Phocis, Locris, and Thessaly were also excellent, and the highest anticipations were formed as to the achievements such an army was certain to perform.

These anticipations were not disappointed. At the suggestion of his Peloponnesian allies, Epaminondas marched into Laconia, although winter had now set in. His army crossed the intervening mountains in four separate divisions, which were reunited at Sellasia, and the Eurotas was passed at a point two or three miles below Sparta. That city had never been fortified; indeed, according to tradition, Lycurgus had commanded his countrymen not to place their trust in walls, but to rely solely on the protection of their own military virtues. The situation was in truth so admirably defended by the natural ramparts of the surrounding mountains, that it may fairly have seemed unnecessary to provide any other outworks. The position of Sparta being inland, there was no possibility of an attack by sea; and it would therefore be difficult to conceive a city better able to bid defiance to external foes. For centuries, Sparta had been an aggressive Power; but it had never suffered from invasion, owing, doubtless, at once to the valour of its people, and the strength of its natural defences. The genius of Epaminondas, however, overcame difficulties from which others had shrunk. Had the mountains been vigorously defended, his enterprise might, perhaps, have been foiled; but he encountered scarcely any opposition in his march to the Eurotas. Nevertheless, the mere fact of crossing such rugged mountains in the depth of winter was a military achievement of no common order, and involved a risk which might have been serious. The Spartans, notwithstanding their boasted self-reliance and coolness, were filled with consternation when they found that a hostile force was close upon their city. The women were loud and passionate in the expression of their fears —a fact which confirms the remark that in moments of danger and trial they were not at all superior to the women of other Grecian States; and even the men were doubtful as to the best method of procedure. The situation was fraught with peril of the most alarming kind, for there was a strong probability that external assault would be aided by internal disturbance. Many of the servile classes, and of the poorer citizens whose freedom was but a barren possession, showed symptoms of insubordination which might have ripened into revolt. It was hoped to divert a good deal of this discontent by offering their liberty to such of the Helots as were willing to fight against the enemy. More than six thousand of this degraded body came forward with the offer of their services; but the authorities were disquieted by the very success of their own appeal, and dreaded to arm so large a number of men who had the memory of old wrongs and sufferings to avenge. It was afterwards discovered that a considerable number of Helots and Perioeci had joined the Thebans; so that the Ephors were not without justification for their distrust.

The fate of Sparta appeared sealed; but the cavalry of Epaminondas were repulsed as they advanced towards the city, and Agesilaus, acting with as much vigour now that he was old as he had done in earlier years, encircled the town with a series of defences sufficiently formidable to render an attack inexpedient. Epaminondas consequently directed his march to Helos and Gythium, the latter of which places was the port and arsenal of Sparta. Both these towns were set on fire; the whole valley of the Eurotas was devastated; and the invaders then returned towards the frontiers of Arcadia. Having reached that central land early in 369 B.C., Epaminondas founded a new city on the banks of the Helisson, to which he gave the name of Megalopolis, and peopled it with inhabitants drawn from forty Arcadian townships. The city was designed as the capital of the Arcadian Confederacy, and it was appointed that a synod of the whole union should meet periodically at this spot for the transaction of affairs common to the confederated republics. Before leaving Arcadia, Epaminondas commenced building another town called Messene, the citadel of which was planted on the summit of Mount Ithome, where in early times had stood a city destroyed by the Spartans in the first Messenian War. The fortifications, both of the citadel and of the new town, were remarkably strong, and the territories attached to the city extended to a considerable distance north and south. Thus, the old Messenian State, which Sparta had crushed after a most heroic resistance, was restored by the policy of Epaminondas, and the Lacedæmonians found themselves flanked on two sides by powerful commonwealths—that of Messene, and that of the Arcadian Confederation. It being now essential to Sparta that she should procure new allies, a league was formed with the Athenians, on the understanding that all claims to superiority and headship should be abandoned.

This arrangement was effected after the return of Epaminondas to Thebes, and it was part of the agreement that the united forces of Athens and Sparta should occupy Corinth, and guard the passes of the Onean Mountains, so as to prevent another invasion of the Peloponnesus from the north. Epaminondas, however, was not deterred from making a second attempt, and in 369 B.C. appeared before the position occupied by the Athenian and Spartan allies. Notwithstanding the strength of the enemy, the Theban commander believed he could force his way through the hostile lines, and the event justified his view. He attacked the Lacedæmonians a little before daybreak, and completely defeated them. His army was thus enabled to pass once more into the Peloponnesus, and the allied forces made no attempt to pursue. Being speedily joined by the Arcadians, Argives, and Eleans, Epaminondas attacked Sicyon, Pellene, Epidaurus, and Trœzen, and ravaged their territories. The first of those towns deserted Sparta for the Theban alliance, and others were compelled to surrender. Phlius, however, successfully repelled all assaults, and an attempt on Corinth failed. Dionysius of Syracuse soon afterwards sent twenty triremes to the assistance of the Spartans, and on board these vessels were two thousand Gauls and Iberians, together with fifty horsemen, who seriously harassed the Thebans in subsequent operations. The invaders found it expedient to evacuate the Peloponnesus, and the war for a time was concluded.

While these events were proceeding, the Arcadians exhibited great capacity and vigour under the leadership of Lycomedes of Mantinea, who successively defeated the Athenians and Corinthians in the Isthmus, and the Spartans in the vicinity of Geranor. Flushed with the fortunate results of his audacity, Lycomedes sought to exercise a greater supremacy over the Peloponnesus than was agreeable to the citizens of Elis; and the Thebans also began to be jealous of a power which they had called into existence, but which seemed to be already passing beyond their control. The attention of Thebes, however, was at this time drawn towards the opposite direction by events in Thessaly, which threatened her safety almost as much as the tyranny of the Lacedæmonians in the days of their predominance. Jason of Pheræ had been succeeded by his brothers Polyphron and Polydorus, both of whom were assassinated after exceedingly brief reigns. Power was then exercised by another brother, Alexander, who appears to have been the author of the political murders immediately preceding his own advancement. Alexander, like Jason, was a man of courage and capacity. Shortly after his assumption of supreme rule, he took the city of Larissa, on the Peneus, and so excited the fears of the Thebans that they sent a force under Pelopidas into his dominions, during the year 368 B.C. The despot of Pheræ was glad to solicit peace, and had the mortification of seeing a defensive league established by the Theban commander among the cities of Thessaly. Pelopidas then entered Macedonia, where he concluded an alliance with the regent, Ptolemy. It was usual to give hostages as a guarantee for the observance of these international treaties, and one of the hostages on this occasion was the youthful son of Amyntas, afterwards the celebrated Philip of Macedon. Returning to Thebes, Pelopidas took the youth with him, and he remained there some years, acquiring a knowledge of the art of war, and studying the manners and pursuits of the Greeks. The danger in the north was thus removed; but in the south the Lacedæmonians, in alliance with their Sicilian friends, were beginning to recover some of the power they had lost. The Arcadians were defeated in an engagement which, as far as they were concerned, was attended by great slaughter, while the Spartans had not a man killed. On this account, the contest was afterwards known to the successful side by the title of "the Tearless Battle." Some of the work of Epaminondas was thus undone; yet the Thebans were not sorry to find that the Arcadians, who had been presuming too much upon their newly-acquired powers, were unable to stand without the assistance of those who had delivered them.

In the hope of bringing the Achæans into the Theban alliance, Epaminondas conducted a third expedition into the Peloponnesus in 368 B.C. The Achæan cities at that time occupied a neutral position, but it was thought they might be induced to unite their fortunes with those of Thebes, as a protection against the influence of Sparta, which had always been exerted to their oppression. The proposals of Epaminondas were accepted, and their governments were allowed to remain in power without any modification. On his return home, Epaminondas was accused of betraying the interests of Thebes in thus acting towards Achaia. His proceedings were accordingly reversed; governments of a democratic character were set up in the Achæan cities, and numbers of persons belonging

PELOPIDAS LEADING THE THEBANS AT THE BATTLE OF LEUCTRA.

to the oligarchical party were driven into exile. These outcasts gave all their influence to the cause of Sparta, and proved very troublesome in fomenting counter-revolutions. The moderation of Epaminondas would have avoided all such difficulties; but the popular feeling was against him, and in the following year he was not re-elected as Bœotarch. For a time, however, the success of Thebes was indisputable, and, in 367 B.C., Pelopidas and Ismenias were sent as ambassadors to Susa, to obtain the recognition by Persia of the Theban supremacy. The Peace of Antalcidas had in truth conferred upon the King of Persia a certain right of allowing or disallowing the predominance of any one Grecian city over the others. It was doubtless a humiliation to the land that any such interference should be solicited, or even tolerated; but the policy of Sparta, when she found the strength of her rivals too great for her, had introduced a vicious precedent, which it was now difficult to set aside. The Persian sovereign listened with favour to the representations of Pelopidas, and, although that statesman was opposed by the Athenians, his prayer was granted. A rescript was issued by Artaxerxes Mnemon, recognising the independence of Messene and Amphipolis. Thebes was declared the head of Greece. The Athenians were commanded to lay up their ships-of-war in ordinary, and a decision was given in favour of Elis, and against Arcadia, in regard to the supremacy over the Triphylian cities. All this involved a plain assertion of sovereign rights in Hellas, and the result should have been hateful to every Greek. The vanity of the Thebans, however, was gratified, while the Arcadians and some of the other allies expressed the strongest disapproval. They were already jealous of Thebes, as they would have been jealous of any other superior State; for the old tendency to disunion, so long a part of the Greek nature, had learned nothing from misfortune, or from the plain necessity of union against common danger.

Shortly after the return of Pelopidas and Ismenias from Susa, in 366 B.C., they were sent on a mission to Thessaly, apparently with a view to obtaining an acknowledgment of the rescript from that State. At Pharsalus they were met by Alexander of Pheræ, who, by an act of great treachery, seized the persons of both, and cast them into prison. This breach of good faith struck such terror into the Thessalian partisans of Thebes that several of them submitted to the tyrant, and Athens, conceiving that the brief day of Theban supremacy had come to an end, sent a fleet and an army to the support of Alexander. The insult was one which the Thebans found it necessary to avenge without delay; indeed, the rescue of Pelopidas was a matter of the utmost importance to them, as he was one of the best of their generals. A large force was marched into Thessaly, and, although it was accompanied by Epaminondas, that great man was now serving only as a soldier in the ranks. The commanders were persons of no capacity, and the army was speedily driven back. The Thessalians and Athenians followed hotly in the rear, and the whole force would probably have been destroyed, had not the soldiers, taking the law into their own hands, re-appointed Epaminondas as their general. By his coolness, courage, and skill, he was able to bring the army safely back to Thebes, and was then once more entrusted with the supreme direction of military affairs. A second expedition into Thessaly, in 365 B.C., was attended by success. During the whole intervening period, Pelopidas had been detained in prison by the tyrant of Pheræ. It is related of him that, even in this situation of doubt and peril, he maintained so high a spirit as to send repeated messages of defiance to Alexander, telling him that he acted absurdly in putting to death so many of his subjects, and at the same time sparing *him*, who would assuredly punish him for his perfidy, should he ever regain his freedom. Alexander asked why he was in such haste to die. "In order," replied Pelopidas, "that you, by becoming hateful both to gods and men, may the sooner be brought to destruction." Alexander probably feared the consequences to himself of so extreme a step as the murder of Pelopidas. Yet Epaminondas, on invading Thessaly, thought it prudent to avoid driving his enemy to desperation. Appealing alternately to his hopes and fears, he at length persuaded him to accept a truce, with the condition of releasing Pelopidas and Ismenias. Epaminondas then marched back to Thebes.*

An alliance between Athens and Arcadia, prompted by an unfriendly feeling towards Thebes, was concluded about this period. The Athenians had been annoyed by the occupation of Oropus, a town on the borders of Attica and Bœotia, by a Theban garrison, and the Arcadians, as already related, were indisposed to admit the Theban supremacy. To render the new alliance permanent, it was necessary for the Athenians to secure an open and free communication with the Peloponnesus. They accordingly determined to seize Corinth, with which they were then in alliance, and which therefore they could not treat in such a manner without

* The events in connection with Thessalian and Macedonian affairs, and the actions of Pelopidas, are somewhat confused as to their sequence, being related in different order by various historians.

the grossest breach of faith. The plot was fortunately discovered before it could be carried into execution, and the Corinthians refused to admit the Athenian commander into the fort of Cenchreæ. Warned by this danger, Corinth opened negotiations with Thebes for a general peace. A meeting of the allies was convened at Sparta, and a partial pacification was the result; but Lacedæmon refused to recognise the independence of Messene, which Thebes as resolutely asserted; so that Thebes, Sparta, Athens, Arcadia, and some of the other States, still remained at war. Athens sent a large fleet into the Ægean under the command of Timotheus, who extended the maritime dominions of his State, and conquered several places on the sea-coasts of Macedon and Chalcidice. The naval forces of Timotheus were speedily encountered by a fleet under Epaminondas, who appeared in the Hellespont in 364 B.C. This was the first time that the Thebans had acted as a marine power; but it was one of the ambitious ideas of Epaminondas that his country might be as great by sea as by land. His anticipations, however, were doomed to disappointment. His fleet effected nothing of importance, and no further attempt of the same nature was ever made by the Theban Republic.

Another expedition into Thessaly occurred in the same year, when Pelopidas led an army against Alexander of Pheræ, whose tyranny had induced many of the Thessalians to request the assistance of Thebes. On reaching Pharsalus, Pelopidas learned that Alexander was advancing against him with greatly superior forces. The Theban commander is said to have been accompanied by no more than three hundred horsemen, the rest of his legions having been deterred from proceeding by the superstitious fears caused by an eclipse of the sun at the moment when they were about to march—an omen to which the soothsayers had given a disastrous interpretation. At Pharsalus, Pelopidas collected a number of Thessalians as an auxiliary force; but even then he had far fewer troops at his disposal than the commander to whom he was opposed. The encounter took place on the high grounds about Cynoscephalæ, when the onset of the Thebans and their allies was so impetuous that the troops of Alexander were routed. The despot endeavoured to rally them, and, while thus occupied, was observed by Pelopidas, who, enraged at the memory of his imprisonment, rushed wildly forward, and challenged Alexander to single combat. The latter, dreading his enemy, retired within the ranks of his guards, but was followed by Pelopidas, who, for the gratification of a personal feeling of antagonism, exposed himself to an extent which was not justifiable in a chief commander. Inspired, apparently, by the vehemence of his feelings, he struck down a number of his opponents, until at length, transfixed with many darts, and pierced with many spears, he fell dead, fighting to the last moment with an ardour which may have been admirable in itself, but which certainly involved a dereliction of duty to the State he represented. The fall of their general, however, did not discourage the Thebans, though it afflicted them with an irreparable loss. The army of Alexander was defeated, and the Thessalians opposed to him repaid the splendid services of Pelopidas by grand funeral honours. They requested that the last obsequies should be performed in their country; and, this being granted, the body was met in procession by magistrates and other high officials, accompanied by priests and young people, bearing trophies and garlands. The battle of Cynoscephalæ was fought in 364 B.C. Another Theban army, amounting to 7,000 men, was afterwards sent into Thessaly, and Alexander was compelled to confine his dominions to Pheræ and the adjacent country, and to swear allegiance to Thebes. He was subsequently murdered by his wife and brother-in-law; and thus ended the Thessalian tyranny, which at one time threatened the subjugation of all Greece.

At the time these events were occurring in the north, a war was being carried on between Elis and Arcadia in the south. The quarrel arose out of a disputed right of dominion over certain territories; and the Eleans, in the assertion of their claim, seized the town of Lasion, situated in a hilly country north of the Alpheus. Very shortly afterwards, they were driven out of this stronghold by the Arcadians, who then took possession of the sacred district of Olympia, the guardianship of which had belonged to the Eleans. When the Olympic festival of 364 B.C. was approaching, the Arcadians concentrated a large army in the neighbourhood of the temple, in order that they might resist by force any attempt on the part of the Eleans to recover possession of the ground. While the games were proceeding, large bodies of troops from Elis and Achaia were seen approaching. A furious combat ensued, and the Eleans, who had always asserted their right to conduct the festival, were defeated, and compelled to retire. The Arcadians then proceeded to despoil the temple of Olympia; but this was regarded as an act of such audacious sacrilege that most of their allies turned against them. Peace was concluded in 362 B.C., and the Eleans were restored to their former position with respect to Olympia, and the sacred observances conducted

there. During this struggle, the Eleans had been supported by Sparta, while some of the Arcadian cities enjoyed the countenance of Thebes. When the peace was sworn to at Tegea, which was the centre of Theban influence in Arcadia, the Theban governor seized the principal members of the Spartan party, but released them on the interference of the Mantineans, who sent envoys to Thebes, demanding the punishment of the official. It is some derogation from the noble character of Epaminondas that he defended the action of the governor of Tegea, and menaced the Arcadians with a renewal of war, as a punishment for their having concluded a peace without the sanction of Thebes. His excuse must be found in the not unnatural fear that, if Arcadia should incline to the Spartan alliance, as some of the cities had already done, the predominance of Thebes would be destroyed, and all the efforts of his life reversed.

In the summer of 362 B.C. Epaminondas marched, for the fourth and last time, into the Peloponnesus. At the head of a numerous army, he entered Tegea, where he was joined by several of the Arcadians. The forces of the enemy were concentrated at Mantinea, and the Spartan king, Agesilaus, who was by that time very old, conducted his Lacedæmonians towards the same spot. The moment seemed to Epaminondas favourable for a sudden march on Sparta itself, which, in the absence of Agesilaus, might perhaps prove vulnerable. The design, however, became known, and a swift Cretan runner overtook Agesilaus in time to bring him back to Sparta before Epaminondas had arrived there. The Theban commander penetrated into the city, but found the streets so well defended that he considered it prudent to retreat. He then made an attempt on Mantinea, which, however, was now occupied by a body of Athenian cavalry, who repulsed the Theban and Thessalian horse. On the 8th of July, Epaminondas entered the plain between Mantinea and Tegea, where the ground, though flat in itself, is shut in by lofty mountains. Here he was speedily encountered by the enemy; but, as Epaminondas ordered his troops to halt and ground their arms, the Spartans believed that he did not intend to offer battle that day. They accordingly broke up their ranks, while some of the cavalry even relieved themselves of their breastplates, and unbridled their horses. But Epaminondas meant to fight as soon as he had made the necessary dispositions. Once more he formed his Bœotians into a column of great depth and solidity, and suddenly, to the surprise and consternation of his adversaries, began the charge, with the same swiftness and vehemence as at Leuctra. After a hurried attempt to organize their line of battle, the Spartans and Mantineans broke and ran. The others, finding themselves unsupported, saw no hope of safety but in flight; and Epaminondas was following in their rear, when a lance pierced his body to a considerable depth. It would seem that this occurred during a rally of the enemy, and that Epaminondas, in the ardour of pursuit, had ventured too near his exasperated antagonists. He had previously been wounded by other darts, which he was able to draw out. The fatal missile, however, passed into his breast with such force that the wood broke short, leaving the iron barb in his body. The incident struck dismay into his troops, who at once abandoned the pursuit, and the Spartans and their allies afterwards claimed the victory as their own, which it cannot really be considered.

The dying hero was carried off the field by his soldiers, and conveyed insensible to his tent. On recovering consciousness, he asked what had become of his shield, and, on its being brought to him, he kissed it. He then inquired on which side lay the victory; and on being told that his Thebans were triumphant, he exclaimed, "I die unconquered." Next he asked for the two commanders on whom he destined that the chief command should devolve after his death. It was answered him that they were both slain; upon which he said, "Then you must make peace." Shortly afterwards, he ordered that the spear-head should be withdrawn; a great gush of blood followed it, and the soul of Epaminondas passed away, in the forty-eighth year of his age. It was the death which he had always desired, as that most befitting a soldier; and it may perhaps be doubted whether, had he lived many years longer, his country would have retained the position to which his genius and self-devotion had exalted it. Thebes had been but an insignificant republic before his time; it became insignificant again after his death. But his greatness shed a halo round the State, which all succeeding times have acknowledged. "In this man only," says one of his biographers, "were joined all the virtues and good parts that could be wished for in a grave, politic, and great captain, to make him perfect in all things; for in the liberal sciences,—in experience, ripe understanding, force of eloquence, strength of body, and disposition of person,—in height and greatness of courage,—in temperance, wisdom, watching, sweetness, and courtesy,—in hardiness, prowess, good judgment, and sufficiency in military discipline,—I know not where there is to be found so complete a man." To this eulogium, all authors, ancient and modern,

have assented; and yet it must be acknowledged that Epaminondas effected nothing permanent. He helped to deliver his country from the despotism of Sparta, and he sought to create, on behalf of Thebes, a supremacy such as that which had been exercised by Sparta herself, and by Athens. Yet it is questionable whether, beyond the mere fact of his re-establishing the independence of Thebes, he accomplished any good in compensation for the loss of life entailed by all his victories. This, however, was the fault rather of his race and of his age than of himself. Epaminondas was a truly great figure, and the brightness of his fame is not shadowed by a single act that can be called a crime.

Peace was concluded before the Theban army evacuated the Peloponnesus, early in 361 B.C., and its terms, briefly stated, were that all things should be left in the condition in which they then stood. The predominance of the Spartans was thus brought to a close, and Agesilaus now turned his attention, notwithstanding the burden of eighty years, to the affairs of Egypt, which country he determined to assist in its revolt against Persia. He accompanied an Egyptian army into Phœnicia, and intrigued with Nectanebo against Tachos. In returning to Sparta, about the close of 361 B.C., he died at Cyrene, in Northern Africa, and was succeeded by his son, Archidamus III. As a soldier, the virtues of Agesilaus could hardly be surpassed; but he had the vices of the Spartan character, and in moral grandeur will bear no comparison with his great rival, Epaminondas.

CHAPTER XLI.

SICILY AND THE CARTHAGINIANS.

Sicily after the Failure of the Athenian Expedition—Hermocrates of Syracuse—Second Invasion of Sicily by the Carthaginians—Dionysius the Elder made Dictator—Temporary Peace with the Carthaginians—Revolt against Dionysius—Increase of the Power of Syracuse—Renewed War with Carthage—Syracuse Blockaded by Himilco and Mago—Failure of the Carthaginian Expedition—Successes of Dionysius in Magna Græcia—His Sacrilegious Habits—Victories of the Carthaginians—Power of Dionysius—His Death and Character—The "Ear of Dionysius"—Story of Damocles—Visit of Plato to the Syracusan Court—Accession of Dionysius the Younger—Second Visit of Plato—Banishment of Dion—Revolt in Syracuse, and Flight of Dionysius—Tyranny of Dion—His Remorse and Assassination—Dionysius resumes the Government—Timoleon of Corinth—His Operations against the Syracusan Tyranny—Capitulation of Dionysius—His Last Years at Corinth—Wise and Liberal Government of Timoleon—Defeat of the Carthaginians—Death of Timoleon—Early Life of Agathocles—His Appointment to the Dictatorship—Cruel and Arbitrary Government—War with Agrigentum and Carthage—Defeat of Agathocles on the Himera—Blockade of Syracuse—Invasion of Africa by Agathocles—Subjugation of a Large Part of the Carthaginian Republic—Change of Fortune, and Desperate Situation of the Syracusan Army—Escape of Agathocles, and Conclusion of the War—Final Achievements of Agathocles—Reign of Hiero II.—Absorption of Syracuse into the Roman Republic.

We are now approaching the threshold of that Macedonian conquest which, while it gave a fresh extension to the energies and influence of the Greek race, extinguished the separate existence of the chief Hellenic commonwealths. But, before we enter on this final stage, it will be necessary to trace the fortunes of the Greek colonies in Sicily, from the memorable era when the Athenian expedition under Nicias was so lamentably defeated, in 413 B.C., down to the predominance of Rome. The Sicilian Greeks, though probably mingled to some extent with the native populations of the island, had many of the characteristics of Hellenic communities. Among these were the tendency to political revolution, and the sharp division of the people into aristocratic and democratic factions, the rivalry of which sometimes led to the establishment of despotism. This was the case at Syracuse shortly after the discomfiture of the Athenians. The leader of the democratic party was Diocles, while the aristocrats were headed by Hermocrates. Both were uppermost for a while; but their contentions simply paved the way for the ascendancy of the first and second Dionysius. Of humble origin, but good education, the elder Dionysius, after serving in a public office, joined the army with which Hermocrates was acting against the Carthaginians, who had once more invaded the land in 409 B.C. At that time, Hermocrates was under a sentence of banishment from Syracuse, so that the force he commanded was an irregular levy, which he had himself collected at Selinus, on the opposite or western side of Sicily. The martial character of his adherents, and his own success against the invaders, together with the fact of his having numerous partisans at Syracuse, induced him to believe that he could forcibly re-establish himself in that city; but, during an attempt to gain possession of the place by night, in 407 B.C., he was killed. Had he succeeded in this enterprise, he would probably have

consolidated his power, for he was a man of ability. As it was, his death opened the way for Dionysius.

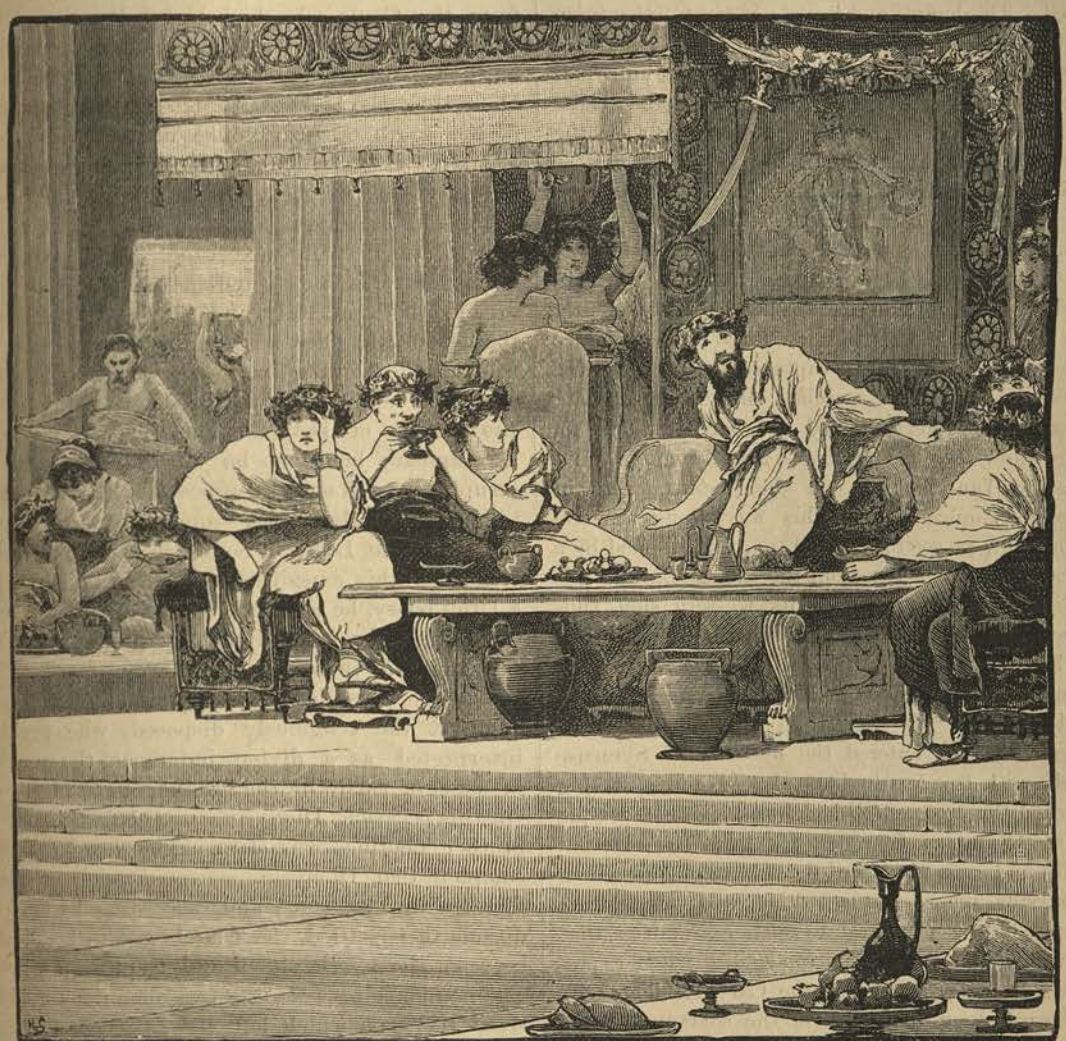
In the attack on Syracuse, Dionysius was so badly wounded as to be left for dead; but he afterwards recovered, and was allowed to re-enter the city. The Carthaginians had by this time captured Selinus, Himera, and Agrigentum. They had in the first instance been called into that part of Sicily by the people of Egesta, who, being oppressed by those of Selinus, asked the assistance of Carthage. This was granted: Egesta was relieved, and Selinus was afterwards attacked, when movable towers and battering-rams were employed by the assailants. Notwithstanding a desperate resistance, the Carthaginians captured Selinus, plundered the city, and burned it. They then took Himera, treated it after the same ruthless fashion, and slaughtered three thousand prisoners to appease the manes of Hamilcar, who had been killed before the walls in 480 B.C. Agrigentum was taken in 406 B.C., and the Carthaginians, being supported by the Siculi of the interior, established themselves on the southern side of the island. The Greek colonies of Sicily were thus threatened with complete subjugation, and the exigencies of the time required a man of special energy and resolution. After the fall of Agrigentum, which had been assisted by Syracuse, the people of the later city assembled to consider the existing state of affairs and Dionysius accused the commanders and the magistrates of neglect and treachery. Although fined for making these charges, he persisted in the expression of his views, and at length persuaded his fellow-citizens to supersede the existing generals. He himself was included among the newly-appointed officers, and, although unsuccessful in an attempt to relieve Gela, which was then besieged by the Carthaginians, he acquired so great an influence over the Syracusans as to obtain from the general Assembly, about 405 B.C., a vote proclaiming him supreme chief of the Republic. Dionysius was only twenty-five years of age when thus made dictator; so that his abilities and force of character must have been of no common order. One of his first measures was to augment the pay of the soldiers; his next was to increase their number. Subsequently, under the pretext that his life had been attempted, he procured a body-guard of 1,000 mercenaries; and his power soon became that of a despotism, though not without the sanction of republican forms.

ANCIENT SICILIAN COINS. (*From the British Museum.*)

1. Coin of Naxos. Obv.: head of Dionysius. Rev.: Silenus with wine cup and thyrsus. End of 5th Century B.C.
2. Coin of Syracuse. Obv.: head of Arethusa. Rev.: Quadriga. Probably commemorative of the chariot race of Olympia in 388 B.C.
3. Coin of Syracuse. Obv.: head of Arethusa wearing jewelled net, on dolphin. Artist's name, KIMON. 405—345 B.C.

A second unsuccessful attempt to raise the siege of Gela followed soon after, and Dionysius then retreated, rousing the people against the Carthaginians as he went. During this expedition, a certain number of horsemen attached to his army conceived a design to overthrow his power, and, riding hastily into Syracuse, raised an insurrection there. The house of the tyrant was plundered, and his wife so brutally treated that she died of her injuries. Hearing of what was being done, Dionysius followed rapidly to his capital, and, setting fire to the gate of Achradina, forced his way into the city. The leaders of the revolt were then put to death, and the predominance of the despot was again established. The Carthaginians, being afflicted by a pestilence, made proposals of peace, about 404 B.C., and these were accepted by Dionysius, who then devoted himself to the fortification of Syracuse,

particularly that part which was built on the island of Ortygia, forming the eastern side of the great port. Expeditions were next undertaken against some of the free States of Sicily, which were reduced beneath the sway of Syracuse. But the absence of Dionysius on these enterprises gave occasion to the malcontents to raise fresh disturbances, and the despot, returning to his city, found himself closely besieged in Ortygia, where he was reduced to great extremities. On the population of the island itself he found he could rely; for he had already taken care that it should consist entirely of his own partisans and mercenaries. But outside this stronghold his foes were so numerous and powerful that it was impossible to vanquish them by direct attack. Dionysius, therefore, had recourse to stratagem. By a pretended treaty, he threw his enemies off their guard, and then hired a body of European mercenaries from the Carthaginian garrisons which still remained in some of the Greek towns of Sicily, by whose aid he recovered the sovereign power. Having disarmed the people as a precaution against future revolt, he subdued Ætna, Naxos, Catana, and Leontini, and then once more reverted to his favourite project of expelling the Carthaginians from Sicily.



THE BANQUET OF DAMOCLES.

Vast preparations for an extensive war were made during several years, and artificers were invited from Greece and Italy to help in the building and equipment of a great fleet, in the manufacture of arms, and in the invention of new engines for besieging towns. To obtain the popular favour,

Dionysius greatly moderated the severity of his rule, and adopted a conciliatory manner not only to the Syracusans, but also to the neighbouring Greek cities. Numerous soldiers flocked to his service from various parts of Greece, and in 397 B.C. the dictator convoked a general meeting of the people, and proposed hostilities, which were unanimously voted. The houses and vessels of the Carthaginian traders at Syracuse were pillaged, and Dionysius sent a herald to Carthage, to declare war, unless all the Greek towns in Sicily were evacuated. These terms being refused, the Syracusan ruler took the Carthaginian-Sicilian city of Motya, the walls of which were battered down by some of the new engines recently constructed for such purposes. An immense booty was obtained in this place, and most of the other Carthaginian towns were reduced in rapid succession. But a change of fortune presently set in. A large Carthaginian force under Himilco landed at Panormus, captured and destroyed Messana, and then marched on Syracuse. The Siculi of the interior joined the Carthaginians, for they knew they had nothing to gain from Dionysius. Passing Tauromenium, on the eastern coast of Sicily, Himilco pursued his way along the seashore, but, on getting near Ætna, was stopped by a great eruption of lava from the mountain, and was obliged to move round by its western side, thus reaching Syracuse by a more circuitous route than he had anticipated. A little while before his arrival there, in 395 B.C., the Carthaginian admiral, Mago, had defeated the Syracusan fleet near Catana, after which he entered the harbour of Syracuse itself with two hundred vessels. Himilco, having reached the city, established himself in the temple of the Olympian Jove, not far from the external walls, and even plundered the suburb of Achradina. Dionysius received some ships and men from Sparta, but was reduced to such extremities that he was on the point of surrendering, when a pestilence again broke out in the Carthaginian camp, and carried off thousands of the soldiers. Thus encouraged, Dionysius made an attack by sea and land, and inflicted so severe a discomfiture on Himilco that he secretly paid the Syracusan ruler three hundred talents for permission to retreat.

Notwithstanding these reverses, the Carthaginian Republic would not relinquish its designs on Sicily, and in 392 B.C. a fresh army was despatched under Mago. This commander, however, was unable to effect anything, and was glad to re-embark on condition of paying the expenses of the war. Dionysius had next to encounter a new enemy on the Italian mainland. The chief cities of Magna Græcia had formed an alliance against him; but he succeeded in effecting a combination with the Leucanians, and their united forces, overcoming all opposition, devastated the territories of Thurii, Croton, Caulon, Hipponium, and Locri, so that the people of Magna Græcia were compelled to sue for peace. It is stated by Justin* that about this time Dionysius received an embassy from the Gauls who had burnt Rome, and who offered their alliance to the Syracusan conqueror; but the story does not seem very probable. Dionysius, who had twice before attacked Rhegium, in the south of Italy, once more besieged it in 387 B.C. After a long and obstinate investment, the city was reduced, the surviving inhabitants were sold as slaves, and the commander of the troops was cruelly executed. The power of Dionysius was now undisputed in Sicily, and dreaded both in Italy and Greece. The mind of the despot was filled with ambitious projects; but, to carry these into effect, funds were needed, and at one time he proposed to the Illyrians to plunder the temple of Delphi. This he was unable to accomplish; but that he was entirely devoid of scruples in such matters appears by the fact that he pillaged several temples—amongst others, that of Proserpina, at Locri, in Southern Italy. On sailing back from this expedition, which had yielded him a large booty, he observed to one of his followers, on finding the wind unusually propitious, "You see how the immortal gods favour sacrilege"—a jest which must have cost him many a supporter amongst the religiously disposed, who probably interpreted as a divine judgment the renewed invasion of Sicily by the Carthaginians in 383 B.C. On this occasion, Dionysius was defeated, and his brother Leptines was slain. The reverse was so complete that Dionysius accepted peace on terms dictated by Carthage; and, according to the conditions then settled, the island was to be divided between the Carthaginian and Syracusan powers. The boundary between the two dominions was the river Halycus, which left the eastern and larger part of Sicily to the Syracusans, and the western to the Carthaginians. Being in a position of superiority, it is surprising that the African invaders did not take much more; but they exacted from Dionysius a sum of 1,000 talents for the expenses of the struggle.

A long period of peace supervened upon this war, and Dionysius, notwithstanding his recent ill-fortune, continued one of the most powerful rulers of the time. Syracuse was strengthened and enlarged; new fortifications, docks, arsenals,

* History of the World, Book XX., chap. 5.

and other public buildings, were created; and the population soon exceeded that of Athens. The authority of the dictator extended not merely over the larger half of Sicily, but over a portion of Magna Græcia. Colonies were planted on the coasts of the Adriatic, and the fleets of Syracuse were known and respected both in that sea and in the Mediterranean. Entertaining a high opinion of the Spartans, Dionysius concluded an alliance with them, and on more than one occasion, as we have already seen, assisted them with armies when pressed by the exigencies of war. But, while thus supporting the Lacedæmonians, he did not forget his cherished ambition of driving the Carthaginians out of Sicily, if by any means he could accomplish it. In 368 B.C., he again attacked his old enemy, but was once more foiled, and, at his death in the following year, the Carthaginians were still in possession of at least one-third of the island. The life of Dionysius closed after a manner sufficiently ignominious. He desired to obtain recognition as a poet, and, when his compositions were hissed at the Olympic Games, made another attempt at Athens, where a tragedy of his composition obtained the prize. The news reached him immediately after the conclusion of a fresh truce with the Carthaginians, and he gave himself up to a spirit of wild rejoicing. Although usually a temperate man, he ate and drank on this occasion to such excess that he fell senseless, and died of fever in the sixty-third year of his age. This, at least, appears to be the most probable account of his end; but, according to some writers, his intemperance brought on a lingering disorder, to alleviate the pains of which his physicians administered a soporific dose that proved too strong in its effects. It was even thought that he had been poisoned by design; but this is a fate so commonly ascribed to despotic rulers as to become questionable through mere repetition.

Dionysius had enjoyed supreme power at Syracuse for thirty-eight years, and it is difficult to believe that he could have retained his position so long—especially as his enterprises were not always successful—unless he had been supported by a large number of the Syracusan people, and given active expression to their wishes. Although a man of despotic inclinations, Dionysius was a popular ruler in the democratic sense of the term. He was, it is true, what the Greeks understood by a tyrant, because he rendered himself supreme over the State for a long course of years, but he was not an irresponsible sovereign, since the democratic forms of the Syracusan Republic were always respected, and on important occasions he convoked the Assembly of the people, that he might obtain their sanction for his projects. Still, like most dictators, he was often capricious to the extent of injustice and oppression. Whether all the tales related to his discredit are historically correct, may be doubtful; but the mere existence of such anecdotes creates a presumption that some degree of truth attaches to them. It is said that, being distrustful of submitting himself to a barber, Dionysius burnt off the ends of his hair and beard, and that he never admitted his wife or children to his private apartments without causing their robes to be first examined for concealed weapons. The story of the cave, constructed by Dionysius in such a way that the complaints of those immured in it were conveyed by a serpentine passage into a room where a sentinel was always placed, appears scarcely credible, and has been disputed by critical writers of the modern school. A cavern of remarkable form, having some sort of connection with a ruined building, is indeed still to be seen in Syracuse, and popular belief has assigned to it the title of "the Ear of Dionysius;" but that it was ever devoted to such a purpose is extremely questionable, and the additional detail, that the artificers employed in making the cavern were all put to death, lest they should reveal for what purposes the work was designed, gives a still greater appearance of improbability to the anecdote. However unscrupulous and arbitrary he may have been in the exercise of his power, there is no conclusive evidence that Dionysius was systematically bloodthirsty, and it is not easy to see what he could have gained by listening to the groans and maledictions of his captives. The chief authority for the life of Dionysius now extant is the History of Diodorus Siculus, who lived about three hundred years after the period of the Syracusan despot, and who is usually regarded as a very credulous writer. Diodorus repeated the gossip of his day, and doubtless that gossip was not wholly without foundation; but it cannot be accepted as sufficient testimony against a man who, whatever his faults, conferred a benefit upon Hellenic Sicily by checking the advances of the Carthaginians.

Equally questionable is the celebrated story of Damocles, which has too much the character of an apologue, or moral tale, to bear the aspect of truth. Damocles was a courtier about the person of the despot, and one of his daily flatterers. He said his master must be the happiest of men, because of the splendours by which he was

surrounded; but Dionysius cured him of that belief by a practical illustration of a very effective character. He conveyed him into a saloon of Oriental splendour and Sybaritical luxury, furnished him with a magnificent banquet, and placed a retinue of slaves at his absolute disposal. For a time he fancied himself in the region of the blessed, until, happening to cast his eyes upward, he beheld a naked sword hanging above his head by a single hair—a sight which filled him with such extreme alarm that he gladly relinquished the pleasures he had until then so keenly enjoyed. We are of course to regard the sword as typifying that fear of popular vengeance under which a tyrant always lives; but, if so, we must needs allow that the hair which suspended the sword over the head of Dionysius was one of remarkable toughness and constancy, since it never broke during the whole thirty-eight years of his rule. Dionysius had something in common with the better characteristics of the Greek race. He was at least desirous of intellectual distinction, and his court was visited by philosophers and poets. Plato was in Sicily about the year 389 B.C., and was introduced to Dionysius by his brother-in-law, Dion; but the tone of his discourses was so unpleasing to the wilful and luxurious despot that he was soon dismissed. While on his passage to Greece, Plato was seized by the captain of the vessel, and sold for a slave in the island of Ægina, where, however, he was repurchased by the philosopher Anniceris of Cyrene, who sent him back to Athens. This outrage has been imputed to the machinations of Dionysius, who doubtless regarded Plato with feelings of ill-will.

Not only did Dionysius preserve his power to the last, but he was able to transmit it to his son, who succeeded to the office of chief ruler as easily as if he had been a king whose hereditary claims were recognised by the constitution of the State. Dionysius the Younger was a man of irregular passions and small abilities; but, being still youthful, he placed himself in the hands of his uncle Dion, who, notwithstanding his republican inclinations, had always been faithful to the late dictator. Believing that the new monarch could be influenced for good if properly trained, he invited Plato to make a second visit to Syracuse, where he arrived about 364 B.C., attracted, apparently, by the hope that he might induce his pupil to make a practical experiment with the ideal Republic, where everything was to be ordered according to pure reason. For a little while, the exhortations of the philosopher seemed to bear good fruit. The young sovereign showed some wish to acquire knowledge, reduced the luxury of his table, and began to moderate the rigours of the despotic system he had inherited from his father. Had he persevered in these tendencies, the results might have been different for the whole of Sicily, and he would probably have had the assistance of Dion in any honest endeavour to establish a government at once firm and liberal. In his youth, Dion had been a disciple of Plato, who said he had never found in any auditor so great a readiness to be impressed with his discourses, or to adopt his principles in action. It appears to have been the earnest desire of Dion that his nephew should complete the expulsion of the Carthaginians from Sicily, and civilize the native tribes of the interior by the grace and culture of Hellenic manners. But whatever hopes he may have entertained were soon dashed to the ground.

It is possible that Plato, whose conception of a political State was highly idealised, may have irritated the young man by setting before his eyes too lofty a standard of human life and duty; but, whether this were so or not, the younger Dionysius was exposed to antagonistic influences which proved too strong for his weak and voluptuous nature. His courtiers, fearing the effects of Plato's teaching, procured the recall of Philistus, a man of learning and ability who had been banished from Syracuse, but who was well known for his devotion to arbitrary power and princely indulgence.* The faction opposed to Dion and Plato then became more determined in their efforts to bend the sovereign to their wishes, and to ruin all who would have led him into a better path. It was alleged that Dion was intriguing with the Carthaginians, and an intercepted letter was produced, which, supposing it to be genuine, confirmed the accusation. Dion was suspected of a design to depose Dionysius, and to place another of his relatives on the throne. Probably no such scheme had been formed; but the young prince was misled by circumstances not wholly devoid of suspicion, and at once threw himself into the arms of the reactionary party. Dionysius enticed his uncle into a private conference near the sea-shore. Gradually leading him down to the very brink of the harbour, he produced the intercepted letter, and, without waiting for any defence or explanation, forced him on board a vessel which was under orders for Italy. The injustice of the act is apparent; yet Dionysius did not proceed with the vindictiveness usually characteristic of tyrants.

* Philistus was the author of a history of Dionysius the Elder, which is now lost.

From Italy Dion proceeded to Greece, and his nephew, while detaining his family as hostages, allowed his friends to load two ships with his effects, and send them out to him.

The banishment of Dion left Plato in a situation of extreme danger. The more violent partisans of Dionysius advised him to put the philosopher to death; but these counsels were repudiated by the prince, who, through the agency of the Pythagoreans resident in Syracuse, even implored him to remain. Plato consented, and was treated in the palace with marked respect, though no longer with any inclination to adopt his ideal of a political State. Such an association, however, was not likely to continue long unbroken. Plato urged the recall of Dion, and Dionysius, incensed at the suggestion, removed him to the castle under a species of qualified captivity. The remittances which Dion had until then received were stopped; his property was confiscated and sold, and the proceeds were distributed among the friends of Dionysius. Shortly afterwards, Plato was suffered to depart, and the despot gave himself up without control to the turbulent and licentious instincts which had hitherto been held in check. It was in 360 B.C. that Plato returned to Greece, and, meeting with Dion at the Olympic Games, gave him so detailed an account of the injuries which Dionysius had inflicted on his family that a descent on Sicily was speedily put in preparation. Nearly three years, however, passed away before Dion could get together eight hundred men, with whom to make the attempt. Their numbers were largely increased after landing in Sicily in 357 B.C., and, as Dionysius had recently sailed to Italy with a fleet of eighty vessels, the operations of the insurgents had all the greater probability of success. Marching rapidly throughout the night, Dion reached Syracuse by dawn, and his troops were seen crowning their heads with garlands, and sacrificing to the rising sun. The Syracusans received them as friends and deliverers; the gates were thrown open, and Dion at once found himself master of the whole city, with the exception of Ortygia. On returning from Italy, Dionysius vainly endeavoured to recover possession of his capital, and, being defeated at sea, again departed, leaving the citadel in charge of his son, Apollocrates, in 356 B.C. Dissensions soon afterwards broke out amongst the revolutionists, and Dion was for a time deposed, but quickly recalled when the incapacity of his successors had resulted in serious disaster. The enemy had made a sortie from Ortygia, slaughtered large numbers of the citizens, and set fire to the town; so that when Dion returned, he had to make his way over burning ruins, amidst the dying and the dead. The assailants, however, were speedily driven back; Apollocrates was at length compelled by famine to surrender the citadel; and Dion was now the undisputed chief of the Republic.

However admirable Dion may have appeared so long as he was a mere speculator in the abstract fields of political science, the possession of power had as corrupting an influence upon him as upon many others. His predilections are believed to have been towards a limited monarchy, with a large infusion of the aristocratic element; but in act he was a tyrant, sterner than his nephew had yet shown himself to be, though probably devoid of those licentious and intemperate habits which made the younger man so contemptible. His bearing was harsh and dictatorial; he refused to re-establish the democratic freedom of earlier times, and, by showing in various ways a disposition to respect the former dynasty, exasperated all those to whom that dynasty had been hateful. It was expected that the fortifications of Ortygia, the stronghold of tyranny, would be destroyed; but when the naval commander, Heraclides, proposed that step, Dion caused him to be privately assassinated. Heraclides was one of those who had conspired against Dion, and effected his temporary removal from the dictatorship: a circumstance which should have made him all the more careful in avoiding an act so easily imputed to personal vindictiveness. Dion never recovered his peace of mind after thus compassing the death of his rival. He imagined himself pursued by the avenging furies of the Greek religion, and recognised the hand of the gods in the loss of his only son, who, during a fit of anger, threw himself from the house-top, and was instantly killed. The end of his own life, however, was now near at hand. His friend Calippus, an Athenian, formed a conspiracy against him, and at the head of a body of assassins burst into his house. Dion fought desperately for his life, but was at length despatched with a dagger, in 353 B.C. His wife and sister were afterwards put to death; but at a later day the Syracusans honoured the memory of Dion as their deliverer from the tyranny of his nephew. Calippus remained at the head of affairs for about a year, and was then driven into exile; after which a state of anarchy ensued, leading to the restoration of Dionysius, who recovered Syracuse about 346 B.C. During his ten years of absence, he had ruled as a despot at Locri, in Magna Græcia, the native city of his mother, and had given general offence by his cruelty and license. The renewal of his reign at Syracuse began under evil influences. The supremacy of that city over

the other Greek towns of Sicily had by this time been destroyed. Leontini was rising into a position of some importance, and had become a centre of intrigue for the disaffected Syracusans. Dionysius found himself threatened not merely from this direction, but by the Carthaginians, who were making preparations for another attack on Sicily; and the general condition appeared so hopeless that the Syracusan exiles, despairing of help within the limits of their own island, appealed for assistance to Corinth, their mother-city.

The Corinthians listened to this request, and despatched an expedition to Syracuse under the command of Timoleon, who had already acquired a great reputation by his devotion to republican freedom. With tears and agony of heart, and not without many efforts to avoid the necessity, he had caused his own brother, Timophanes, to be slain, when the latter attempted to make himself absolute in Corinth—an act which the political morals of that period not only sanctioned, but applauded, although the mother of Timoleon banished him from her sight as a murderer. It is idle to judge of ancient Greeks by modern standards; yet, notwithstanding the general approval of tyrannicide in a country which made heroes of Aristogiton and Harmodius, Timoleon fell into a brooding melancholy under the shadow of his mother's anger, and, after an attempt to starve himself to death, passed his days in an austere seclusion. When desired to take command of the expedition to Syracuse, he evinced a disinclination to the task, and was roused to action only by the remark of one of the magistrates, who said to him, "If you accept the command of this expedition, we shall believe that you have killed a tyrant; if not, we cannot but call you your brother's murderer." Timoleon saw the justice of the distinction, and in 344 B.C. sailed for Syracuse with ten ships, having on board about a thousand men. Before he arrived in Sicily, the opponents of Dionysius had entered into secret negotiations with the Carthaginians, who sent out a fleet of twenty vessels to prevent the landing of the Corinthians. This force Timoleon managed to evade, and landed at Tauromenium, not far from Mount Ætna. He soon found himself opposed by Hicetas, one of the Syracusan exiles who had settled for a time at Leontini. Hicetas had already given proof of considerable military skill. He had defeated Dionysius, and driven him into the citadel of Ortygia. All the rest of Syracuse had accepted his rule; and it was this commander whom Timoleon encountered on his march to the city which he had been sent to relieve. The forces of Hicetas were completely routed at Adranum, and Timoleon then proceeded to Syracuse without further difficulty. He found Dionysius still in possession of Ortygia, and the Carthaginian fleet stationed in the port; but the Syracusan despot was not inclined to prolong the struggle, and, entering into negotiations with Timoleon, he surrendered the citadel into his hands, in 343 B.C. He was permitted to settle in Corinth, where he spent the remainder of his life, sometimes amusing himself with low debaucheries, and at others indulging his taste by training public singers and actors in what he considered the graces of their profession. It has been stated that he kept a boys' school for his maintenance; but the circumstance is doubtful. In the midst of his coarseness and dissipation, he appears to have retained a sense of dignity which would have entitled him to respect, had it not been so frequently contradicted by his lower nature. Being asked one day what he had gained by the wisdom of Plato, he replied, "The ability to bear as I do this change of fortune." The wisdom of Plato would have been productive of still better fruit, had it taught him how to bear the temptations and the opportunities of power.

Although Hicetas had been defeated in the open field by Timoleon, he still kept possession of Achradina, one of the suburbs of Syracuse. With the help of the Carthaginian fleet, and of an army of 60,000 Carthaginian soldiers, he was enabled to blockade Timoleon in the stronghold of Ortygia. A sally on the part of the Corinthians delivered them from this peril, and the Carthaginian commander, relinquishing all hope of success, departed with his forces. Hicetas maintained the struggle, but, on being attacked by Timoleon, was so completely worsted that he returned to Leontini. Timoleon at once destroyed the citadel, together with the costly monument of the elder Dionysius, and erected courts of justice on the spot. So great was the reputation of this successful commander that other Sicilian cities requested his protection; but for the present he had enough to do in restoring the fortunes of Syracuse. The town was almost destitute of inhabitants, and it was necessary, first of all, to populate the waste and deserted places, which had been ruined by civil contention and foreign interference. The exiles were invited to return; at the solicitation of Timoleon, a Corinthian colony was sent out; the adjacent lands were equally divided among the citizens; and a fund for the use of the State was created by the sale of houses. Emigrants from various parts of Magna Græcia soon poured into the city, and it was not long before the population reached a total of 60,000. When these matters had been accomplished,

Timoleon attacked Hicetas in Leontini, and forced him to capitulate. But a formidable danger was now at hand; for the Carthaginian Republic had not approved the precipitate retreat of their commander, Mago, and were preparing an expedition on a scale of great magnitude. An army of 70,000 men was disembarked at Lilybæum, on the south-western coast of Sicily, in 340 B.C. Timoleon could not obtain the services of more than 12,000 men, 1,000 of whom afterwards deserted; nevertheless, he marched without hesitation into the western or Carthaginian division of Sicily, and, partly by the help of a terrific storm, which beat in the faces of the Carthaginians, inflicted on them a crushing defeat. In their flight, large numbers were drowned in the river Crimesus, which had been flooded by the sudden and violent rain. Multitudes of prisoners were taken, while those who escaped spread such a panic in Lilybæum that the whole army at once re-embarked for Carthage.

The next achievement of Timoleon was to expel the petty despots who had established themselves in other Hellenic towns of Sicily. The Carthaginians gave their support to these rulers, but, being unable to prevail, made peace with Timoleon in 338 B.C., when the Halycus was again established as the boundary between the two races. Hicetas and some of the other petty tyrants were put to death, and a time of prosperity, lasting for several years, settled on the eastern portion of Sicily. The task of Timoleon was now fully accomplished, and he at once laid down his power, receiving as the reward of his services nothing more than a dwelling-house and some landed property. Having sent for his family from Corinth, he settled in Syracuse as his adopted city, and his influence in the State, though indirect and unofficial, was gratefully acknowledged by all. He had by this time become blind; but, whenever important affairs were discussed in the Assembly, he was carried thither in a car, amidst the acclamations of the people. He survived the battle of Crimesus only four years, dying in 336 B.C., and festivals were appointed to be annually observed on the day of his decease. The character of Timoleon was distinguished by a stern and almost awful grandeur. It is evident that he was not devoid of the most tender and sacred feelings; but duty, according to the Greek ideal, was with him the strongest sentiment of all, and from that he never flinched—at how great a cost of mental distress we can in some degree estimate if we may not wholly realize.

TIMOLEON IN THE SYRACUSAN ASSEMBLY.

For nearly twenty years after the death of Timoleon, the historian has little to record with reference to the Greek colonies in Sicily. At the end of that period, the government of Syracuse appears to have been an oligarchy; from which it is to be inferred that considerable changes must have been effected in the meanwhile. There had, as usual, been wars and variations of fortune; but of these we have no details, and it is not until a little later than the year 320 B.C. that any figure of importance appears upon the scene. About that date, however, a young man named Agathocles began to make himself conspicuous. He was the son of a potter, and originally worked at his father's trade; but, being a youth of ambitious ideas, and singularly gifted with personal beauty, strength, and prowess, he soon attracted attention. After leading a wild life in connection with a band of robbers, he served as a private soldier, and found a patron in Damas, a wealthy Syracusan, who, being appointed to the command of an army to serve against Agrigentum, nominated Agathocles one of his subordinate officers. On the death of Damas, not long after, Agathocles married his widow, and thus inherited one of the largest fortunes in Syracuse. He had formerly distinguished himself by valour and military capacity in the field; he now showed equal ability as a fluent speaker in the Assembly of the Syracusan citizens. The State was then governed by Sosistratus, an adherent of the aristocratical party, and a personal enemy of Agathocles. The latter was driven into exile, and, retiring into Italy, lived for some time a life of irregular adventure. On the restoration of democracy, he returned to his native city, but was again expelled on suspicion of aiming at the tyranny. Gathering together an army of his own, and apparently entering into some terms of amity with Carthage, he made himself so formidable to his fellow-citizens that he was in time recalled by the latter, though not without the exaction of an oath that he would attempt nothing in the way of personal ambition. This oath he took with such apparent fervour—touching the altar and statue of the goddess Demeter as he did so—that the Syracusans named him General and Guardian of the Peace, and empowered him to put down all factious movements. But Agathocles was not the man to be controlled by any sense of religious sanctity, and, supported by the mercenaries, he soon used his power after the most tyrannical fashion. The members of the aristocratic party were given up to all the excesses of military rage; it is said that four thousand persons were murdered, and that six thousand fled. These crimes were committed with the approval, and by the help, of Hamilcar the Carthaginian, who sent some of his African soldiers to strengthen the army of Agathocles. During two days, Syracuse presented a scene of massacre, rapacity, and outrage, such as has rarely been exceeded; and when at length the sullen peace of exhaustion and terror had settled down upon the city, Agathocles remained master of the commonwealth he had sworn to protect. He then convened the popular Assembly, and, telling his auditors that he had effectually put down oligarchy, and restored the freedom of the State, he received from their hands the position of dictator, after many hypocritical pretences that his greatest desire was to lead the life of a private citizen. This was about 317 B.C.

The revolution thus effected had a democratical, indeed almost a socialistic, character. Agathocles addressed himself more especially to the poorer citizens, to whom he promised abolition of debts, and a new distribution of lands.* The humbler citizens received gifts of money out of the property of the rich exiles, and the masses of the people were conciliated by the affable and unpretending manners of the dictator. A large military and naval force was rapidly brought together; magazines of arms and stores were laid up; and the power of Syracuse was extended over a considerable part of Sicily, including some of the most important of the Greek towns. Although Hamilcar had connived at the advancement of Agathocles, the Carthaginians of Sicily were annoyed at his success, which they justly regarded as threatening their own dominion. They accordingly made complaints to the parent city, the rulers of which superseded Hamilcar by another general of the same name. About 314 B.C., the repeated aggressions of Agathocles induced the people of Agrigentum, where the Syracusan exiles had found an abode, to take up arms on behalf of Sicilian liberty; and in this purpose they were aided by the people of Gela and Messana. The war was of short duration, and peace was concluded on the understanding that, although each of the Greek cities in Sicily was to enjoy its local government, most of them were to be under the supremacy of Syracuse, which in truth meant the despotism of Agathocles. The power of the adventurer continued to increase until he was repulsed in an attempt on Agrigentum. The Carthaginians now attacked him with their fleet, but without effecting anything of

* Grote's History of Greece, Part II., chap. 97.

importance; and in 310 B.C. their army was assailed in the territory of Gela by so superior a force that Agathocles returned to Syracuse laden with spoils. Nevertheless, the Carthaginians did not accept their defeat, but, sending an immense armament into Sicily, began to redress the balance which up to this point had been seriously against them. Agathocles suspected the loyalty of the tributary cities, especially of Gela, and, marching into that town with a large body of soldiers, massacred four thousand persons, and struck such terror into the rest that they gladly made over to him their money and valuables. He then advanced towards the Carthaginian camp, which was situated near the river Himera, and took up a position on a hill separated from the enemy by the course of the stream. It was the height of summer, and the weather was extremely hot. After a delay of some days, in which each army, apparently fearing the other, refrained from taking the initiative, a long and desperate battle was fought, which resulted in the entire defeat of the Syracusans. During the action, Agathocles exhibited extraordinary pertinacity in making renewed attacks on several parts of the Carthaginian line; and if dauntless courage and fertility of military resource could have gained the day, the Sicilian despot would have been victor. But he was met by equal resolution on the part of Hamilcar, who, doubting whether his army was strong enough for a direct attack until the arrival of reinforcements which had just landed from Carthage, remained steadily on the defensive. These fresh troops approached the Greeks in their rear: at the same moment Hamilcar, correctly appreciating his opportunity, ordered a simultaneous advance of the whole line. The Greeks were swept back across the Himera, and, before they had attained the shelter of their own camp, their numbers were reduced by 7,000 men.

Perceiving the immediate necessity of retreat, Agathocles burnt his camp, and returned to Gela, whence he had set out. Hamilcar then addressed himself to the Greek republics of Sicily, from several of which he received active support. Agathocles soon after retired to Syracuse, where he was blockaded by the Carthaginian fleet, and his situation rapidly became so desperate as to promise the most fatal issues. Nothing, however, could depress the spirit, or limit the mental powers, of this extraordinary man. Feeling that the Carthaginians might not improbably reduce his capital, he determined on an expedient of singular boldness and originality. In 309 B.C., he resolved to carry the war into the enemy's own territory, and to strike the Carthaginian Republic itself at the very heart. With this view, he organised a large army, into which he drafted all his best troops. Although unable to transport horses, he placed saddles and bridles on board the ships, in full reliance on his being able to obtain steeds in Africa. To provide himself with funds, he compulsorily borrowed money, plundered the temples, seized the jewellery of the women, and appropriated the inheritances of orphans. He did even worse than this; for, having given permission to those who feared the hardships of a siege to leave Syracuse while there was yet time, he massacred them as they were passing through the gates, and took their possessions to himself. The real object of the expedition was concealed from all, and, when everything was in readiness, Agathocles waited for an opportunity of getting out into the open sea. One day, the Carthaginian vessels pursued some corn-ships which were approaching the harbour. Agathocles at once escaped with sixty ships full of soldiers; and before the Carthaginians could start in pursuit, their wily enemy had got too far in advance to be overtaken. An eclipse of the sun during the voyage filled the soldiers with apprehension; but, after six days and nights, they reached the coast of Africa about the middle of August, and disembarked in sight of the Carthaginian fleet, the crews of which followed the invaders on to the shore, but were repulsed. In the midst of religious ceremonials, and the blare of trumpets, Agathocles burnt his vessels, either to inspire his men with a more desperate resolution, or to avoid the necessity of sparing a number of troops to hold them; and nothing now remained but to conquer or perish.

Marching straight into the country, Agathocles took several towns, defeated a large Carthaginian army, and inspired the rulers of the Republic with such consternation that human sacrifices on a large scale were offered up to Moloch. It is a curious illustration of the way in which supposed religious duties may be evaded by the wealthy, that the Carthaginian nobles had for some time past bought poor children for the purposes of sacrifice, as a substitute for their own. The devout now clearly perceived—what they had not perceived before—that such evasions were calculated to provoke the wrath of Moloch; and all beheld in their present misfortunes the consequences of his displeasure. The rich were therefore obliged on this occasion to give up their own offspring to the demands of the national religion; but Moloch was not at once propitiated, for the misfortunes of the Carthaginians underwent no abatement until a later period. Agathocles made himself master of the whole

eastern coast, and even invested Carthage itself, in the hope of reducing it by famine. Within that city, the feeling of despair led to a terrible sedition, when Bomilcar, one of the generals, tried to seize the supreme power, but was defeated and slain. In the meanwhile, Agathocles entered into a species of alliance with Ophellas of Cyrene, but ultimately betrayed and assassinated him, that he might get possession of his army. Still further successes were achieved with brilliant rapidity; but events at home presently recalled Agathocles. During the absence of the dictator, Syracuse had at first suffered much from the Carthaginian blockade; but after a time Hamilcar was defeated in an attempt to surprise the city, and lost his life. On hearing of the success of the Syracusans, Agathocles assumed the title of King of Africa, but shortly afterwards—in 307 B.C.—returned to his own city, in consequence of the Agrigentines conspiring with the Syracusan exiles to overthrow his rule. Some of the revolted cities were quickly reduced, and Agathocles was soon back again in Africa.

His good fortune was now in the wane. A mutinous spirit had appeared in the army, which had sustained some serious reverses while its chief was in Sicily; and, to regain the confidence of his men, Agathocles made a rash attack on the Carthaginians, and was disastrously beaten. Retreating to his camp, he found the symptoms of disaffection much intensified. He therefore resolved to depart secretly in the night with his younger son, Heraclides, abandoning both the army and his elder son, Archagathus, who had held the command during his absence. The design being suspected, Agathocles was seized and imprisoned by some of his officers, but, being afterwards released, that he might repel an apprehended attack, managed to escape to Sicily in 305 B.C. His sons were then murdered by the enraged soldiers; the army capitulated to the Carthaginians on honourable terms; and Agathocles himself made peace with the African Republic. After the enormous efforts and vast expenditure of life of the few preceding years, the mutual position of the Syracusans and Carthaginians in Sicily was left precisely where it had been. But Agathocles was free to direct his attention to internal affairs. Egesta, being suspected of disaffection, was stormed and plundered, with the massacre of many of its people; and Agathocles then took vengeance for the murder of his sons, by ordering all the relations of the Syracusans composing his army in Africa to be mercilessly slaughtered. He had now to encounter a rival in the person of Dinocrates, a Syracusan who enjoyed the confidence of the exiles. The insurgents were defeated, and treacherously slain, to the number of seven thousand, after they had laid down their arms under a promise that their lives would be spared; but Dinocrates himself was received into the tyrant's favour, and consented to act as one of his generals. The power of Agathocles, both in Syracuse and the dependent cities, was thus to a great extent restored, and his remaining years were passed in expeditions into Southern Italy and the Lipari Islands. In these enterprises, success again waited on him; but in 289 B.C. he died at the age of seventy-two, after a reign of twenty-eight years. It is probable that his end was hastened by poison; but this is a matter surrounded with some doubt. Agathocles was a man of brilliant audacity and striking genius; but a more frightful incarnation of evil can scarcely be found in the whole range of history. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that he maintained the Greek predominance in Sicily during the whole of his life; and this, it can hardly be doubted, was a better thing for Sicily itself, and for the neighbouring countries of Italy, than the ascendancy of Carthage would have been. On such grounds, we may regard the career of Agathocles with some degree of toleration; on personal grounds, he is entitled to nothing but indignant horror.

The aggressions of Carthage recommenced shortly after the death of the Syracusan despot. Deprived of the vigorous will which had guided them for so many years, the citizens lost courage, and sought assistance of the Epirote king, Pyrrhus (a son-in-law of Agathocles), who rescued them from subjugation, and greatly circumscribed the power of Carthage, but imposed his own authority on their commonwealth from 278 to 276 B.C. In the latter of those years, Pyrrhus quitted Sicily, and the Syracusans placed themselves under the rule of a descendant of Gela, who, after becoming head of the State, was known as Hiero II. The principal difficulties of this ruler arose from the insubordination of the Mamertines, a band of Campanian mercenaries who had taken possession of Messana. To operate with greater effect against these factious warriors, Hiero entered into an alliance with Carthage; upon which the Mamertines applied to Rome for assistance, and readily obtained it. Hiero II. found himself involved in a contest with the great Republic of the Tiber. The war continued during the years 264 and 263 B.C., when Hiero sued for peace, and purchased a remission of hostilities by heavy payments in money and provisions. During the remainder of his reign, the Syracusans were the allies of Rome; but this

portion of their history belongs in its details to the annals of the Roman Republic. After the death of Hiero, in 215 B.C., commotions ensued, which still further weakened the powers of the State. Led by a fatal choice, Syracuse deserted Rome, and allied herself with Carthage. This resulted in the siege of the Greek city by Marcellus, its capture in 212 B.C., and the absorption of the government into the Roman system. Hiero II. is the sunset of Syracusan greatness. He was a mild, liberal, and prudent administrator, and his military achievements were not contemptible. But a far greater power than his was rising up beyond the straits, and, throughout the whole island of Sicily, both Greece and Carthage were to give place to Rome.

CHAPTER XLII.

PHILIP OF MACEDON.

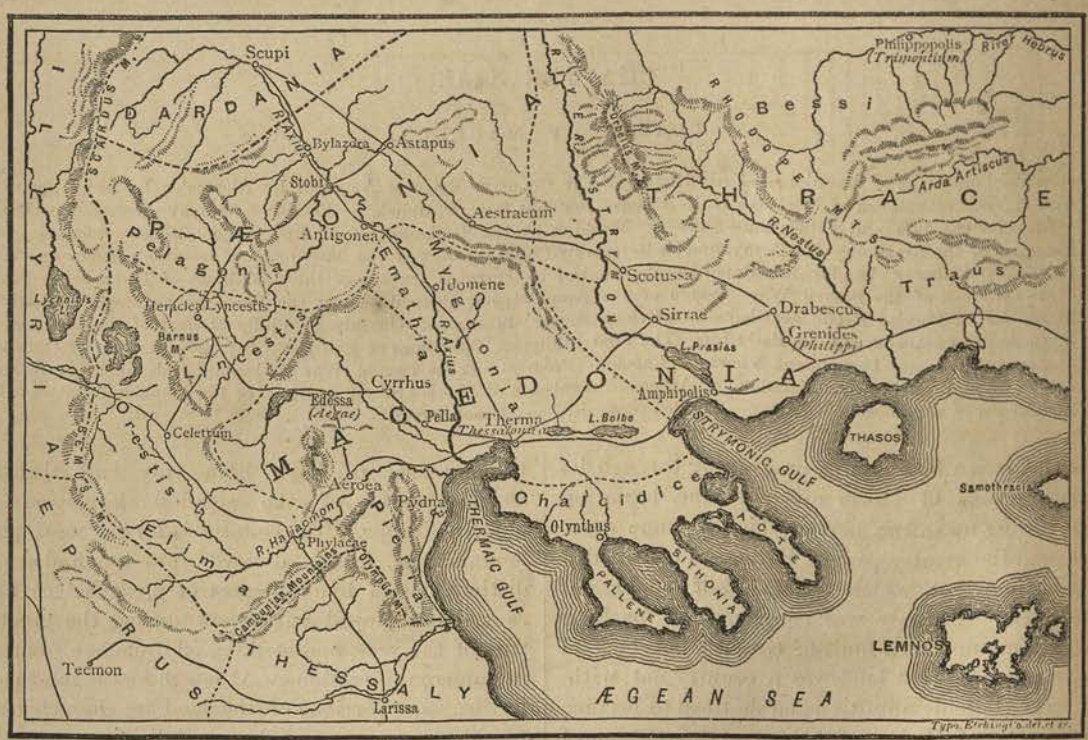
Situation and Boundaries of Macedonia—Early History of the Country—Reign of Amyntas I.—Alexander I. and his Relations with Persia—Antagonism of Perdiccas II. to Athens—Brilliant Rule of Archelaus—Period of Anarchy—Accession of Philip—His Previous Life and Education—State of Macedon at the Beginning of Philip's Reign—Military Successes, and Extension of the Kingdom—The Army, and its Reform by Philip—Nature of the Macedonian Phalanx—Schemes of Philip for the Acquisition of Amphipolis—Rapid Development of his Fortunes—Seizure of the Gold Mines of Thrace—The Social War—Outbreak of the Sacred War—Decree of the Amphictyonic Council against the Phocians—Seizure of Delphi by Philomelus, of Phocis—Relentless Character of the Struggle—Invasion of Thessaly by Philip—Defeat of the Phocians at Magnesia—Demosthenes and his Early Life—The First Philippic—Operations of Philip in Chalcidice—Capture of Olynthus—Alarm at Athens—Despondent Views of Phocion—Progress of the Sacred War—Athenian Embassy to Macedon—Conclusion of Peace between Macedon and Athens—Submission of Phocis—Severe Sentence of the Amphictyonic Council—Devastation of the Phocian Territory—Macedon recognised as a Greek Power.

WHILE Grecian history was progressing through its various phases of storm and sunshine, a nation was growing up in the north, which in time overshadowed the greater part of Hellas, and succeeded in effecting that which Persia itself could not accomplish. Thessaly was considered as marking the extreme northern limit of Greece; but beyond the frontiers of that land was a country not without some Hellenic affinities, and destined to become the mistress of Thebes, of Athens, of Sparta, and of all those other States which shared the glory of the Greek name. The boundaries of Macedonia have varied at different periods; but, regarding the kingdom with some inclusiveness, its limits may be readily pointed out. On the south lay the Cambunian Mountains, which parted it from Thessaly; on the west were Epirus and Illyria, with the mountain-chain of Bernus and Scardus as a line of demarcation; on the north, the heights of Orbelus and Scomius divided the country from Mœsia (the modern Servia and Bulgaria); while on the east the river Strymon ran between Macedonia and Thrace. But this gives greater dimensions to the land than it originally possessed. Excluding Pæonia, its greatest length, from north to south, was not more than ninety miles, while its average width, before the acquisitions of later days, was about seventy; so that its total area in primitive times seems to have been only half that of Belgium*—one of the smallest kingdoms of modern Europe. The country is for the most part mountainous, being divided into a number of distinct basins by eminences of great height and ruggedness, capped with snow during the greater part of the year, and striking off from one another in numerous directions. Although for the most part fertile, some portions of the land are characterized by bleak downs and barren hill-sides; but the more elevated regions are extremely picturesque. Thick forests clothe the slopes of the mountains; waterfalls tumble from crag to crag; clear lakes form centres to several of the valleys; and rivers wind through the gorges on their devious passage to the sea.

In very early times, the country was called Æmathia—an appellation derived from the prince Æmathius, who was supposed to have been a son of Titan and Aurora. The later name of Macedonia was derived, according to some, from Macedo, a fabulous king, or, according to others, from Mygdonia, one of the Macedonian provinces. Of the population, it is difficult to give any ethnological account. The Macedonians were a race distinct from the Hellenes, and probably had

* Rawlinson's Manual of Ancient History.

affinity with the Illyrians and the Pelasgi. Their original seat was in the south-western parts of the country, whence they emigrated in a north-easterly direction. The foundation of the monarchy is ascribed to Caranus, one of the Heraclidæ, who is said to have entered this northern land in 814 B.C.; but the existence of Caranus is somewhat doubtful. Nevertheless, there can be no question that the royal house of Macedon was of Greek origin, and belonged to the race of Temenus of Argos; moreover, some Hellenic colonies had settled among the



MAP OF MACEDON AND THE ADJACENT DISTRICTS.

people. The first monarch of whom we have any certain knowledge is Perdiccas I., who is said to have reigned from about 700 to 650 B.C. Nothing of interest is recorded of him or of his four successors; but Amyntas I., who died in 498 B.C., stands out with some prominence. By that time the Macedonian sovereignty had greatly extended; but a period of trouble now ensued. Amyntas was contemporary with the Pisistratidæ at Athens, and with Darius Hystaspes in Persia. The epoch was one of serious peril to all countries in the south-east of Europe, for the vast Asiatic Empire threatened them with subjection. When Megabazus was left behind by Darius, on returning to his own realms after the failure of the Scythian expedition, that general succeeded in extorting from Amyntas an acknowledgment of Persian supremacy. This placed the Macedonian sovereign in the position of a vassal prince, but did not seriously diminish his power. Six years after the death of Amyntas, however, his son and successor, Alexander I., was obliged to make a more ample submission to the Great King, while still retaining the nominal state of a monarch. During the invasion of Greece by Xerxes, Alexander of Macedon acted as the ally of the Persians, but evidently under compulsion, and with a desire to behave in a manner more becoming one who was proud to regard himself as a Greek by descent. The victory of Platæa delivered Alexander from the ignominy of his vassalage, and, on the retreat of Artabazus with the remains of the Persian army, he fell on their rear, as already related, and inflicted some damage on the straggling and dispirited ranks. Thus relieved from dread of the Persians, the Macedonians again pursued their career of conquest, and the bounds of the kingdom were still further enlarged. The genius of the people was chiefly military. They were a nation of soldiers, eager for dominion and territorial aggrandizement; and it is strange that they should have made no better stand against the encroachments of Persia. Alexander I. reigned about forty-four years, dying

probably in 454 B.C. He was succeeded by his son, Perdiccas II., whose reign was characterized by some important events.

The Greeks had for some time established colonies in the peninsula of Chalcidice, which must be considered as belonging geographically to Macedonia. Several flourishing cities were planted in this region, where the maritime confederacy of Athens gave to that State a degree of power which was formidable to the monarchy of Perdiccas. In 437 B.C., an Athenian colony settled at Amphipolis, on the Strymon, which divided Thrace from Macedon: this created a feeling of antagonism on the part of the latter, especially as Athens gave encouragement to certain Macedonian chiefs who had risen against their sovereign. Perdiccas retaliated by exciting the allies of Athens to resist her supremacy, and in particular by supporting the rebellion of Potidæa, in 432 B.C. But the King of Macedon had another powerful enemy in Sitalces, who reigned in Thrace from 440 to 420 B.C., and who in 429 invaded the dominions of Perdiccas. Peace was effected by a matrimonial alliance between the two monarchies; but the hostile relations of Perdiccas with Athens were of a more lasting character. With occasional intervals of peace, the Macedonian sovereign continued at war with the Republic of Attica throughout the greater part of his reign. It was the era of the Peloponnesian War, and the support of Perdiccas was for the most part given to the Lacedæmonians. His reign came to an end in 413 B.C.

Archelaus, the natural son of Perdiccas II., who succeeded in obtaining the throne for himself, was a prince of great ability and enterprise, though cruel, treacherous, and dissolute. Under his sceptre, the army was strengthened and better organized; forts were erected in various places, to check the attacks of invaders; and highways were carried through the country. The Macedonians had up to this time been an unlettered people; but Archelaus endeavoured to familiarize them with the achievements of Greek intellect. The poets Euripides and Agathon, and the philosopher Plato, were received with honour at his court: indeed, Euripides died at Pella, which Archelaus had made his capital. Zeuxis was employed to adorn the royal palace with paintings, and, under these influences, Macedon began to lose something of the barbarian character which had previously attached to it. No wars of importance occurred during this reign, which, however, would probably have been more distinguished had it been longer. After occupying the throne about fourteen years, Archelaus was assassinated by some personal

THE MACEDONIAN PHALANX.

enemies in 399 B.C. A period of disturbance ensued, and, the direct line of succession having failed, several pretenders obtained brief possession of the crown, and were then either murdered or expelled. For forty years, the kingdom was in a state of revolution or civil war, and subjected to the frequent interposition of the Illyrians, Thebans, Athenians, and Spartans. It is surprising that its independence was preserved against the ambition of foreign nations; but at length the convulsion of anarchy came to a close. In 359 B.C., Perdiccas III., a younger son of Amyntas II., fell in battle with the Illyrians, and was succeeded by his brother Philip, the famous father of a man still more famous than himself,—Alexander the Great.

Philip had undergone a training which excellently fitted him for the post he was ultimately to fill. In relating the fortunes of Pelopidas, we have mentioned that when that general concluded an alliance between Thebes and Macedon, in 368 B.C., he took with him, as one of the hostages, the youngest son of Amyntas II., then recently dead. At Thebes, Philip remained a sufficient time to acquire the manners and culture of a Greek. Being only fifteen at the date of his removal from the Macedonian court, he was at an epoch of life peculiarly favourable to the formation of new principles and habits. In this way he obtained a complete mastery over the Greek language, and it is believed that he made the acquaintance of Plato during his residence in the chief Bœotian city. At any rate, he had the advantage of associating with two such men as Pelopidas and Epaminondas; and, although he appears to have been little impressed by the self-denying part of their characters, he certainly derived from them those military principles which afterwards made him one of the most successful commanders of the ancient world. At the same time, he enjoyed abundant opportunities of studying the Greek nature, the tendencies of the various States, the weak points in the general condition of Hellas, and the means by which alone an ambitious policy could be furthered. These things were not thrown away upon the aspiring and quick-witted youth whom Pelopidas had carried with him to Thebes. To a graceful and attractive person, Philip united a pleasing and apparently sincere address; but beneath this charming exterior lay the subtlety of a despot, determined on subordinating all men and all things to the supremacy of his will. Energetic in temperament, strong and robust of frame, watchful and cautious where circumspection was required, capable of rapid action when the occasion demanded it, and in no respect troubled with scruples of morality, Philip of Macedon was one of those men contrived by Nature to build up great military empires, and to begin new epochs in the history of the world.

After staying at Thebes about five years, Philip returned to his own country in 363 B.C. He was then twenty, and he found a state of things which must have convinced him that nothing but a strong hand would save the monarchy from ruin. His brother, Alexander II., the eldest son of Amyntas II., had been murdered by Ptolemy of Alôrus shortly before the removal of Philip to Thebes, and Ptolemy was established by Pelopidas as regent for the second son of Amyntas, Perdiccas III. This position he retained between three and four years, but was himself slain by Perdiccas in 364 B.C. When that monarch perished, five years later, in his struggle with the Illyrians, he left behind him an infant son, Amyntas, for whom his uncle Philip professed at first to act as regent. At four-and-twenty years of age, Philip, the third son of Amyntas II., found himself in a position which would have tasked the abilities of many an older man. His title to the throne was merely provisional, and would cease directly his nephew came of age. Moreover, there were five pretenders in the field, two of whom had the countenance of foreign Powers. Pausanias was supported by the King of Thrace, while Argæus had the assistance of an Athenian force of 3,000 troops. It was necessary to temporise, and Philip managed so adroitly that he contrived, by promises or bribes, to buy off both the Athenians and the Thracians. On the withdrawal of external succour, Pausanias and Argæus found themselves unable to cope with Philip, and the latter could then give his attention to dangers which were scarcely less serious than the chances of civil war. The Pæonians, on the northern frontier, were threatening aggressive movements, and the Illyrians, animated by their triumph over the late king, had advanced into Macedonia itself, and occupied most of the western provinces.

The rude inhabitants of Pæonia could offer little resistance to the arms of Philip, but the Illyrians were formidable antagonists. The Macedonian sovereign marched against them with an army of 10,000 men, and was encountered by Bardylis, the ruler of Illyria—a man far advanced in years—with a force of equal strength. It was the first time that Philip had been engaged in any battle on a large scale, and he at once proved that the military tuition of Epaminondas had not fallen on inattentive ears. Concentrating his forces on one

part of the opposing line, after the manner of the great Theban, he entirely overwhelmed the Illyrians, and destroyed nearly two-thirds of their army. The rest had no choice but to submit, and Bardylis made over to his successful adversary the principal mountain-passes between Illyria and Macedon. The Macedonian frontier was now pushed westward as far as Lake Lychnitis, and Pæonia was added to the dominions of Philip. All these events (with the exception of the conquest of Pæonia, which was a little later) occurred in 359 B.C.—the very year in which Perdicas III. was slain; and they encouraged Philip to throw aside the pretence of a regency, and openly assume the crown himself. Before the termination of the year, he had been proclaimed king; but it should be stated to his credit that he always behaved kindly to his nephew, and seems to have been regarded by the youth himself, when he grew up, with no unfriendly feelings. We should doubtless allow that something besides personal ambition prompted the decision of Philip. Macedon required a strong and capable ruler; she had found such a ruler in the youngest son of Amyntas II.; and it is highly probable that the people themselves desired the continuance of his power.

After annexing Pæonia, in 358 B.C., Philip began to revolve in his mind much larger schemes of conquest. For the fulfilment of such purposes, the instruments ready to his hand were not in all respects adequate. The Macedonians possessed many of the military virtues in a high degree, and they had already overrun several of the surrounding territories; but they had not as yet attained the discipline requisite for encountering such a people as the Greeks. Their army consisted of two main divisions: a body of cavalry, well provided, well horsed, and drawn from the landed proprietors of the country; and a body of light infantry, formed out of the humble cultivators of the soil. To these must be added a few heavy-armed foot-soldiers of a better order, derived from the population of the towns, in some of which, situated on the sea-coast, a Greek element prevailed among the citizens. Nothing could be better than the cavalry; but the mass of the infantry were miserable soldiers. They were furnished simply with indifferent swords and wicker shields; their bodies were half-naked, or covered with the hides of beasts; and their ordinary lives were not greatly removed from those of savages. Yet even these uncouth barbarians afforded excellent material for a skilful administrator to work upon. Philip determined to give them the requisite training before pursuing the designs he had already conceived; and he accordingly organized the celebrated Macedonian phalanx—a mode of disposing the men in files of sixteen deep, with an interval of three feet between each soldier and the next in his rear.

This formation was irresistible until encountered and broken by the still higher military system of the Romans. The individual members of the phalanx were armed with pikes of extraordinary length, held with both hands when carried at the charge, and presenting to the enemy a bristling array of steel. Each man had also a short sword, a circular shield, a breastplate, armour for the legs, and a broad-brimmed hat. It was with this force that Philip vanquished the Grecian infantry, whose chief weapon was a short, one-handed pike, and who were therefore placed at an immense disadvantage when opposed to men the length of whose weapons was such as to enable them to slay their adversaries before they could come to close quarters. The whole arrangement was most formidable, and Polybius has recorded that the Roman general, Paulus Æmilius, was affected with positive terror when he saw the Macedonian phalanx in battle-array on the field of Pydna, two hundred years after the time of Philip. The Macedonian phalanx is said to have been first employed by Philip in the Illyrian war; but doubtless it was more highly developed afterwards. Other arrangements were introduced into the military system of the country, and a standing army was gradually formed and enlarged. Discipline was enforced with the utmost severity, and any offence against military rule was punished with scourging or with death.

It was not long before Philip came into collision with Athens. The city of Amphipolis, which proved to be the cause of contention, had been founded by Pericles near the mouth of the Strymon, but was taken from the parent State by the Spartan general, Brasidas, in the eighth year of the Peloponnesian War (424 B.C.). Since then, the Athenians had made several attempts to regain possession of the town, which had given them command over that part of Thrace, and was valuable as a seat of trade; but the fortune of war had always gone against them. The people themselves, though of Athenian race, were unwilling to acknowledge any external authority, and successfully maintained their independence for several years. Immediately after his accession to power, Philip of Macedon, dreading that the commonwealth might fall once more into the hands of the Athenians, which would have operated as a serious check on his schemes in that direction, sent envoys

to Attica, by whom an alliance was concluded, on the understanding that the freedom of Amphipolis should be mutually guaranteed. The Olynthians, however, were desirous of enrolling the Strymonic town in their confederacy, and proposed to the Athenians to unite their forces for the defence of Amphipolis against the evident designs of Philip. The Macedonian sovereign now resorted to one of those artifices of which he was a consummate master. He secretly promised to put Amphipolis into the hands of the Athenians, if they would yield Pydna to him, and at the same time break with the Olynthians. To the latter he ceded the town of Anthemus, and thus secured their good-will. He then, in defiance of his previous engagements, took Amphipolis by siege, near the close of 358 B.C.; and, soon afterwards marching against Pydna, forced it to surrender.

Having thus offended the Athenians, it became all the more necessary to be on terms of friendship with the people of Olynthus, and, in order more completely to separate them from their former allies, Philip assisted them to regain Potidæa, which had for some time past been held by Athens. The Athenian garrison, however, he treated with great politeness and consideration, and sent them home with honour. The capture of Potidæa occurred in 356 B.C., and it was in many respects a very important epoch for Philip. In the previous year he had married Olympias, daughter of Neoptolemus, prince of the Molossi, in Epirus; and at about the same period that Potidæa was taken, Philip's son, Alexander, afterwards the greatest conqueror that the world has known, was born to him. At the same time, his general, Parmenio, gained a victory over the Illyrians, and one of his chariots achieved the prize at the Olympic games. Such a combination of events was certain to be regarded by the ancient world as a fortunate augury, and Philip was doubtless encouraged in his ambitious policy by what he must have considered the favour of the gods. Macedon, however, was a poor country, and it was necessary to obtain funds for the prosecution of further enterprises. Philip therefore crossed the Strymon into Thrace, where a range of mountains containing gold-mines invited his cupidity. The mines belonged at that time to the people of Thasos; but the power of those islanders was speedily reduced, and on the site of the more ancient town of Crenides the Macedonian sovereign built a new city, which he called Philippi. From the territory thus acquired, Philip derived an annual revenue of a thousand talents—a sum equal to nearly £250,000 of English money. The town of Philippi, moreover, was important as a military post, which would enable its possessor, if at any time it appeared desirable, to extend his conquests further into the Thracian wilds.

The Athenians not unnaturally regarded the progress of Philip with uneasiness; but their hands were too much engaged with other matters to leave them free for any active opposition. In 357 B.C., a contest had broken out between Athens and her allies, which takes its place in history under the name of the Social War. Since the peace of 361 B.C., consequent on the death of Epaminondas in the previous year, Athens had recovered a great deal of that power which she had lost at the termination of the Peloponnesian War. Her maritime superiority was re-established; some steps were taken towards the restoration of her empire; Samos and the Chersonese were occupied, and the important island of Eubœa once more acknowledged the Athenian sway. It was considered, however, that the power of the Attic Republic was exercised, as before, with too little regard to the rights of others, and the contributions levied by the Athenians on their allies led to considerable dissatisfaction. A coalition was formed against Athens, the principal members of which were Byzantium, Rhodes, Chios, and Cos; and these were assisted in their operations by Mausolus, Prince of Caria—a potentate whose name is chiefly associated with the magnificent tomb (or *mausoleum*) which his queen, Artemisia, erected to his memory. The war which ensued was decidedly unfavourable to Athens. At sea, the Athenians lost some of their best commanders, and the fleet was at length left in the sole charge of Chares, whose abilities were not conspicuous, and whose principles were of even less account. After several vain attempts to subdue the allies, Chares entered the service of the Persian satrap, Artabazus, who had recently revolted against Artaxerxes III. By this act he obtained a sufficient sum of money to pay his men, who were beginning to clamour for arrears; but his operations were attended by no better success than before. Artaxerxes threatened to take the part of the allies, and in 355 B.C. the Athenians thought it prudent to make peace with their enemies, on terms advantageous to the latter.

While this contest was proceeding, another of still greater importance, called the Sacred War, was devastating a different part of Greece, and completing that exhaustion of the national strength which prepared the way for Philip. The Sacred War, like the struggle to which allusion has just been made, commenced in 357 B.C. The parties to the quarrel were Thebes and Phocis, between which States an uneasy feeling had existed for some

years. The Phocians had been allied with Thebes during the greater portion of the career of Epaminondas, but in the last campaign of that commander had refused their assistance. This negative antagonism was followed by positive acts of hostility, and the Thebans, in their exasperation, appealed to the Amphictyonic Council, with which they had great influence. By that body a heavy fine was decreed against the Phocians, on the ground that they had cultivated a portion of the plain of Cirrha, which, after the first Sacred War, in the sixth century B.C., had been consecrated to Apollo, with a solemn injunction that it was to remain waste for ever. On the Phocians remonstrating against this fine, and declaring that it would ruin them to pay it, the amount was doubled by the Council, and the Phocians were required to furnish the money at once, on pain of being reduced to the condition of serfs if they any longer delayed. Less arbitrary conduct on the part of the Amphictyons might possibly have composed the quarrel before it had attained serious dimensions. As it was, the extravagance of the demand made on Phocis, and the cruelty of the alternative, drove the people to desperation, and precipitated a long and ferocious conflict.

Suddenly discovering in Homer's "Iliad" an expression which they chose to regard as establishing their ancient right to the possession of Delphi, the Phocians seized upon the temple, and thus acquired a command over its accumulated treasures. Philomelus, who effected the movement with a force of about 2,000 men, and who afterwards defeated the Locrians of Amphissa in an attempt to rescue the temple, subsequently issued an appeal to the whole of Greece against the injustice of the Amphictyonic Council. The sacred treasures were for the present untouched; but the property of the Delphians was heavily taxed, the temple was fortified, and numerous mercenaries were engaged. The territory of the Locrians was then invaded, and the people, finding themselves at a serious disadvantage, applied to the Thebans for assistance. Philomelus was determined to carry matters with a high hand, and, being unrestrained by religious scruples, extorted from the priestess of Apollo a decree which sanctioned all that he had done. Sparta and Athens supported the views of Phocis: Thebes, of course, assumed an attitude of uncompromising hostility. From Athens the Phocians could expect but little support, as that Republic was then engaged in the prosecution of the Social War, and even Sparta was not in a condition to give very effectual help. On the other hand, Thebes was strengthened by the co-operation of the Thessalians and other communities of the north, so that Philomelus soon found himself in considerable danger. He had already exasperated his adversaries by destroying the bronze tables which preserved the sentences of the Amphictyons, and which were kept in the temple of the Delphic god. He now took a much bolder step, and one more necessary to his position, in announcing that the sacred treasures would be converted into a fund for the payment of mercenaries. Having thus obtained a large sum of money, he was enabled to engage numerous and powerful legions, with which he defeated the Theban and Thessalian allies, who had by this time taken up a position in Locris. Nevertheless, his success was not permanent. The Thebans were reinforced, and a series of battles followed, in which a sanguinary and relentless spirit was exhibited on both sides. All the Phocian prisoners were put to death, as being guilty of sacrilege, and Philomelus retaliated in self-defence. After a good many minor actions, a battle of greater magnitude was fought, which appears to have ended disastrously for the Phocians. Philomelus was killed; but the Thebans, although to some extent successful, were not sufficiently strong to seize on Delphi. They accordingly returned home in 353 B.C., and Onomarchus, the brother of Philomelus, who succeeded him in the command, restored the waning fortunes of his countrymen. He carried his arms through Locris and Doris, invaded Bœotia, and captured Orchomenus; but, after laying siege to Chæronea, was compelled by the Thebans to retreat. Both Philomelus and Onomarchus had exhibited signal courage and ability; but the latter effected a good deal by the favourite Greek instrument of bribery. The treasures of the temple, on being coined, had yielded a total of 10,000 talents. This placed an enormous power at the disposal of Onomarchus, who distributed considerable sums at Thebes and in Thessaly. The expenditure does not seem to have been attended by any satisfactory results, and a large portion of the Delphic treasure was squandered to no purpose.

Meantime, Philip of Macedon had been slowly working his way into Grecian territory. In the first place, he gave assistance to some of the Thessalian nobles against the tyrants of Pheræ, who were supported by the Phocians and Athenians; but, before he could do this, it had been necessary to subdue the Hellenic town of Methone in Pieria, which lay between him and the Thessalian frontier. The siege, which began in

353 B.C., and ended in the following year, was attended by an accident to Philip, who lost the sight of one eye by an arrow. On entering Thessaly, he found himself opposed by the Phocians, who were unwilling that Pheræ should fall into his hands. Hearing that he was in full march against that city, Onomarchus sent his brother Phayllus, with a force of 7,000 men, to its assistance. Phayllus was defeated, but Philip himself, together with his Thessalian allies, experienced a reverse of fortune when Onomarchus appeared upon the scene with his whole army. The king was defeated in two battles, and returned to Macedonia, that he might organize new forces. Entering Bœotia, Onomarchus took the city of Coronea, but, on the re-appearance of Philip in Thessaly, again marched northward, and encountered the Macedonian sovereign near Magnesia. The forces were about equally matched, and the battle (which was fought in 352 B.C.) was prolonged and desperate. Assuming the character of Apollo's champion against the sacrilegious enemies of the deity, Philip made his soldiers wear wreaths of laurel gathered from the woods of Tempe; and religious enthusiasm may very possibly have caused them to fight with the greater determination. At any rate, they gained the victory, and Onomarchus was slain as he endeavoured to swim to the Athenian fleet stationed in the Gulf of Pagasæ. Six thousand of the Phocian mercenaries fell during the encounter, and three thousand prisoners were afterwards put to death. The disaster was most serious for the Phocians, since it laid the whole of Thessaly open to the Macedonian advance. Philip continued his southward march in the hope of entering Phocis, and putting an end to the war; but the pass of Thermopylæ was guarded by so strong a force that he considered it more prudent to retire. Nevertheless, he had effected much. He had asserted his right to interfere in a purely Greek question—the vindication of the Delphic Apollo against his supposed enemies. He had made his power felt in an important division of the Hellenic nationality; and he had obtained that authority over Pheræ which he considered necessary to the promotion of his ulterior views. On the other hand, the Phocians were not altogether discomfited; for Lycophron, the tyrant of Pheræ, obtained permission from Philip to depart with an army of two thousand mercenaries, with whom he joined the army of Phayllus; so that the people of Phocis were in some respects gainers by the revolution that had been effected in Thessaly.

DEMOSTHENES.

The year 352 B.C. was distinguished not merely by the brilliant success of Philip at Magnesia, but by the rise at Athens of a very remarkable genius, the greatest master of oratory that the world has ever known. This was Demosthenes, the son of an Athenian citizen who had made a large fortune by the manufacture of sword-blades. The orator was born about 381 B.C., and was therefore some nine-and-twenty years of age when he first distinguished himself as a political speaker. It is stated that his early education was neglected, but that he afterwards became the pupil of Isæus and Plato. He also paid great attention to the orations of Isocrates, and at the age of seventeen gave some proof of the abilities with which he was endowed. The obstacles that stood in his way were, however, very considerable. His lungs were weak, he had a tendency to stammer, and his

features were apt to be distorted by the difficulties of utterance. How far the stories related of him are true, and how far imaginary, cannot now be determined: but it is said that, to cure the defects in his articulation, he would climb steep hills with pebbles in his mouth; that, to accustom himself to the noise of public assemblies, he would declaim aloud on the sea-shore when the waves were violently agitated; and that, to correct the natural awkwardness of his gestures, he would practise with a sword hung so as to strike his shoulder when he made an improper movement. Some portion of his early years, according to the semi-fabulous accounts, were passed in a subterranean cave, where he studied by the light of a glimmering lamp—a circumstance which afterwards gave his enemies occasion to observe that his compositions smelt of the oil. Whatever the degree of exaggeration in these anecdotes, it is at least certain that Demosthenes, in spite of some natural defects, succeeded, by immense labour and self-denial, in making himself supreme over all the arts of public oratory. Like many other gifted and energetic men, he came of mixed blood. His maternal grandfather had been Governor of Nymphæum, an Athenian settlement in the Tauric Chersonesus. This settlement he is said to have betrayed to the Scythians, when, taking refuge with their chief, he married a Scythian woman, who thus became the grandmother of Demosthenes. It is singular to think of so representative an Athenian having an admixture

AN ORATION OF DEMOSTHENES.

of savage blood in his veins; but the Scythian element may have given intensity and force to his Attic wit and polished refinement of phraseology.*

In the time of Demosthenes, a division had been effected between the professions of the orator and the soldier. Pericles and Cimon were masters of rhetoric, as well as military commanders and statesmen; but, by the middle of the fourth century B.C., the art of oratory had become so highly elaborated that the devotion of a life was not too much for the attainment of perfection. Hence arose a school of speakers, many of whose compositions have come down to the present day as portions of the literature of Greece. Of these men, Demosthenes is the most illustrious; yet it is a question whether the bent of his life was not determined by a merely personal quarrel. His father died when the future orator was only seven years of age, and the family property was deposited in the hands of guardians who abused their trust. Demosthenes was brought up in poverty; but, as he advanced towards manhood, his mind was animated by a strong desire to impeach his dishonest protectors before the jury-court. When about seventeen, he submitted his case to the Dicastery, in a speech which, although delivered by himself, was probably written in part by his master, Isæus. He gained his cause, but was nevertheless unable to recover more than a portion of what was due to him. Encouraged by this success, he next attempted to speak in the Assembly, but failed so disastrously that he was obliged to retire amidst the hootings and laughter of his audience. It was then that he schooled himself after some at least of the methods which have already been described, and that he also took elocutionary lessons of an actor. The result was such as genius, in combination with labour and determination, never fails to effect. Demosthenes became a power in the State, and, although unable to prevent the downfall of Greece, which had sprung too soon into maturity, and was now dying of inherent vices, he uttered words which to Philip must have been sharper than steel, and which have lived through all succeeding times as the eloquent protest of a free people against the tyranny of impending doom.

It was evident to Demosthenes, and to all other Greeks who were not lost in sensuality and sloth, that the design of the Macedonian king was to subjugate the whole Hellenic world. He had broken faith as regards Amphipolis; he had wound his toils about the outlying Grecian settlements in Thrace and Macedon; he had invaded Thessaly; and it was too probable that, after a period of repose, he would renew his attacks upon the several Hellenic commonwealths. To rouse his countrymen from their lethargy, to make them once more warlike and self-reliant, and to discredit their dependence on mercenaries, were the great objects of Demosthenes. His "First Philippic," delivered in 352 B.C., produced less effect than might have been expected; but towards the end of that year it was known that Philip was besieging the fortress of Heræum, on the Propontis, and this was a fact of which it was necessary to take some notice. Nevertheless, the authorities at Athens acted in a most dilatory manner. An armament was voted, but did not sail until the autumn of 351 B.C. Nothing of any importance was done even then, and Philip pursued his designs without check. In 350 B.C., he captured a town in Chalcidice. Olynthus became alarmed for its safety, and Demosthenes delivered three orations in favour of an alliance with that city, which was still at the head of thirty-two Greek towns in the north, and which, had it been properly supported, might have proved a powerful counterpoise to the predominance of the Macedonian despot. Olynthus, however, received scarcely any assistance. The towns of the confederacy were reduced in succession, and early in 347 B.C. Olynthus itself beheld the armies of Philip encamped before its walls. After a gallant defence, the city was treacherously yielded up by two of its principal inhabitants, named Lasthenes and Euthycrates, when the conqueror sold the people into slavery, and razed the buildings to the ground, together with thirty other Thracian and Chalcidian towns. All this took place in spite of three large armaments which the Athenians had sent out to the relief of Olynthus, but which appear to have been managed with extreme incompetence. The Chalcidian peninsula was incorporated with the Macedonian sovereignty, and Philip celebrated his triumph with great splendour at Dium, a town on the borders of Thessaly.

The whole of Greece now took the alarm, and to Athens in particular the prospect was more terrible than any which had been known since the invasion of Xerxes. Demosthenes continued to pour forth his patriotic orations, but he could not create anew the spirit which had animated Hellas in her better days. He had an opponent in Phocion, a man of integrity and strong abilities, but one who exercised a depressing influence over his countrymen by

* Mr. Grote, however, believes the grandmother of Demosthenes to have been a Greek woman of the Bosphorus.

reason of the despair with which he himself was filled. In many respects, Phocion was the very opposite of Demosthenes; for whereas the latter paid the utmost attention to the splendour of his rhetoric, and the graceful flow of his periods, the former prided himself on nothing so much as a blunt directness both of thought and speech. How to express his ideas in the fewest possible words, was the great object of all his efforts; and this disregard of external forms was accompanied by a gloomy manner which made him personally distasteful to the brilliant and versatile Athenians, who, nevertheless, so highly respected his probity that for many years he was elected and re-elected to the supreme position of Strategus. Unfortunately, also, he became connected with men whose motives were of the most questionable character, though his own honesty was unimpeachable. Thus it happened, that while Demosthenes may possibly have enervated the minds of his countrymen by a species of oratory which tended rather to excitement than to action, his rival chilled their natures by views that were unsympathetic and despondent, and by an utterance that was icy in its frigid condensation. Phocion was a rough soldier, simple in his habits, stoical in his character, full of a stern self-suppression which was rather Spartan than Athenian, and so superior to ordinary emotions that no one had ever seen him either laugh or weep, though his disposition was really generous and humane. He had studied in the schools of Plato and Xenocrates, and was about twenty years older than Demosthenes, who dreaded his keen and pithy wit. Soldier as he was, and one not undistinguished in the field, Phocion belonged very decidedly to the peace-party, because he doubted the ability of his countrymen to stand against the Macedonians. It is remarkable that Demosthenes, who was constantly inciting his countrymen to martial defiance of Philip, was personally timid, effeminate, and weak; while his rival, the advocate of a pacific policy, was an experienced soldier, whose courage was beyond suspicion. The decline of Greece had in truth set in; and when a nation begins to lose its greatness, the finest oratory is but the floral offering that bedecks its tomb. At such times, two fatal influences are generally to be discerned. On the one hand there is the inward corruption that first debases, and then destroys, the national soul; on the other hand arises a strong, self-willed, self-contained, and wholly unscrupulous man, who takes advantage of the ruin that he sees beginning, and advances step by step towards the institution of some new order which has perhaps been rendered imperative by the failure of the old. The passive Fate of the Greek people in the middle of the fourth century B.C. was their own inherent degeneracy; their active Fate was Philip of Macedon.

To Demosthenes, however, it seemed possible that Greece might yet be saved by a determined effort, and by the combination of all her forces in resistance to the enemy. He suggested that a confederation of the Grecian States should be organised; and some advance was made towards the realisation of this scheme. Yet no complete or effective union could be established; and, as a substitute, Athens made proposals for a reconciliation with Thebes. The urgency of the common danger became every day more apparent. After the fall of Olynthus and the conquest of Chalcidice, Philip advanced into the Thracian Chersonese, where the independence of the Athenian colonies was threatened by the resistless Macedonians. The continuance of the Sacred War, however, was unfavourable to anything like a general manifestation of Greek strength against the northern invader. Phayllus was still conducting that war on behalf of the Phocians, and, by means of the Delphic treasures, which were yet unexhausted, was enabled to obtain large reinforcements from Sparta, from Achaia, and from Athens. It is almost incredible that at such a time these forces should have been directed, not against the foreign enemy, but against another Grecian State; yet that is the lamentable fact which history has to record. Bœotia was successfully invaded by Phayllus, who then entered the territory of the Epicnemidian Locrians, and took nearly all their towns. Shortly afterwards he died, and the war languished under his successors. The Thebans were getting heartily tired of the struggle which they had themselves provoked, and were accordingly well disposed to listen to any overtures on the part of Athens. There was even some probability of a general pacification among the Grecian States; and the prospect of such a result induced Philip, in the summer of 347 B.C., to make indirect overtures to the Athenians, with a view, apparently, to some friendly arrangement, though of what nature it was impossible to divine.

Many persons regarded such advances with suspicion, and not unnaturally, considering the whole previous career of Philip. Yet it was determined to appoint ten ambassadors, who should proceed to Macedon, and discuss affairs with the conqueror. The rival orators, Demosthenes and Æschines, were two members of this body, which was therefore not wanting in persuasive powers, however unfitted it may have been

to negotiate with a cool-headed, plausible, and crafty opponent such as Philip. Disagreements soon arose between Demosthenes and Æschines, and, after their return from the embassy, each cast the blame of its failure upon the other. There can be no doubt that the transaction was very badly managed on the part of the Athenians. Æschines alleged that Demosthenes betrayed a great want of self-possession; and it is quite possible that he did, since, however overwhelming his power in the tribune, he must have felt himself entirely at fault when dealing with an antagonist like the King of Macedon, against whom the arts of rhetoric could not be brought to bear, and would doubtless have proved ineffectual if they had been. The most difficult part of the case was that Philip did not appear in the character of an adversary at all. He received the Athenians in the most friendly manner, entertained them at magnificent banquets, and enchanted all by the grace and gaiety of his demeanour. It is probable also that he bribed some among their number; indeed, Demosthenes distinctly accused Æschines of malversation in the discharge of his duties. However this may have been, little or nothing was effected by the embassy. Philip promised to respect the Athenian possessions in Thrace; but it was already well known that his promises were worthless. The Athenian negotiators returned to their own city without anything tangible to show as the result of their labours. In 346 B.C., however, Antipater, Parmenio, and Eurylochus, three of Philip's generals, went to Athens on a mission from their master, and a treaty of peace and allianee was arranged, the advantages of which were mainly on the side of Philip. Another embassy (in which Demosthenes and Æschines were again concerned) was then appointed, to procure the ratification of this treaty by the Macedonian sovereign; but, owing to various delays, some of which were contrived by Philip himself, the agreement was not finally sanctioned until after several months, during which the Macedonians advanced into the heart of Thessaly. When at length Philip swore to the treaty at Pheræ, the Phocians were expressly excluded from it.

The object of Philip in ratifying the peace at Pheræ was that he might be near Bœotia, where Phalæcus, the new commander of the Phocian armies, was still in a position of strength. Philip was resolved on breaking the power of this general, and on quelling the Phocians, with whose sacrilege he had from the first professed to be deeply horrified. As soon as the Athenian ambassadors had left, he set out for Thermopylæ, through the defile of which he passed without opposition. The situation of the Phocians was now desperate, for their allies, the Athenians, had deserted them. Although Demosthenes, on his second return to Athens, charged his colleagues, especially Æschines, with having betrayed the national cause by an interested submission to Philip (a charge of which Æschines was acquitted a few years later), his views met with but little attention. A decree was passed, conveying the thanks of Athens to the Macedonian king, and declaring that, unless the Phocians delivered up Delphi to the Amphictyonic Council, the military force of Athens would be employed to compel them. Phalæcus saw that the struggle was at an end. As soon as Philip had passed Thermopylæ, he met him at the town of Nicæa, and at once entered into terms. He was permitted to retire into the Peloponnesus with 8,000 mercenaries, and Philip then invaded Phocis, all the towns of which surrendered unconditionally.

The next step was to occupy Delphi, where, at the bidding of the Macedonian ruler, the Amphictyons were assembled to pronounce sentence upon the religious offenders. The king had promised the Phocians that he would mediate between them and the members of the Council, and they had admitted him into their country with the greater readiness because of this undertaking. He does not appear, however, to have done anything to mitigate the wrath of the Amphictyons, and the Council, when convened, was found to consist only of the Locrians, Thebans, and Thessalians, who were the bitterest enemies of Phocis. The verdict was terrible in its severity. It was decreed that the Phocians were to be for ever excluded from the league; that their arms and horses should be delivered up; that all their towns, with the exception of Abæ, should be destroyed; that the inhabitants should be distributed amongst villages containing not more than fifty houses each; and that they should annually pay sixty talents to the temple of Delphi until the sum of 10,000 talents, equal to nearly two millions and a half of English money, had been repaid.

This merciless judgment was carried into execution by Macedonian and Theban troops. Twenty-two towns were utterly destroyed, and the banks of the Cephissus, which had formerly been remarkable for their fertility, passed for several years into the condition of a wilderness. Ten thousand Phocians were sent captive to the Thracian colonies of Philip, and the remainder were compelled to cultivate their estates for little else than to raise the required revenue for the temple of Delphi.

The Bœotian towns hostile to Thebes were given up to the vengeance of that city. Corinth was deprived of its presidency over the Pythian Games, because it had assisted the Phocians; and it was settled that this honour was thenceforward to be enjoyed by Philip, in combination with the Thebans and Thessalians. Sparta was excluded from the Amphictyonic Council; and the two votes formerly possessed by the Phocians were transferred to the kings of Macedon. By these arrangements the Macedonian monarchy was recognised as a Grecian Power. As a member of the Amphictyonic Council, the voice of Philip would, whenever he pleased, be heard in the affairs of Hellas; and, with a triumphant military force to back his subtle policy, the future was assured to him. After this fashion, the Sacred War came to an end in 346 B.C. Phocis was entirely destroyed; but that was not all. The destruction of Greece itself began visibly from the same date.

CHAPTER XLIII.

DEMOSTHENES AND PHILIP.

Feeling at Athens after the Conclusion of the Peace—Views of Isocrates—The Policy of Hopefulness, and the Policy of Despair—War between the Spartans and the Megalopolitans—Interference of Philip in the Affairs of the Peloponnesus—A Macedonian Embassy sent to Athens—The Second Philippic of Demosthenes—Ineffectual Attempts at an Understanding—Vast Projects of Philip—His Invasion of Thrace, and Collisions with the Athenians—Attack on Selymbria and Perinthus—Athenian Expedition to Eubœa—Mutual Animosity between Philip and the Athenians—Declaration of War—Philip compelled to Raise the Siege of Byzantium—His Discomfiture by the Thracian Triballi—Quarrel between the Athenians and the Locrians of Amphissa—Judgment of the Amphictyonic Council against the Locrians—Philip appointed General of the Amphictyons—His Designs on Attica—Alliance between Athens and Thebes—Progress of the War with Philip—Battle of Chæronea—Immediate Consequences of the Action—Conduct of Philip towards the Athenians and Thebans—Measures for the Defence of Athens—Terms of Peace—Philip and his Motives—Death of Isocrates—Position of Sparta towards the Macedonian Conqueror—Congress at Corinth—Declaration of War against Persia, with Philip for Generalissimo of the Grecian Forces—Return of Philip to the North—Family Dissensions—Quarrel between the King and his Son Alexander—Marriage of Philip's Daughter to Alexander of Epirus—Magnificent Festivals—Assassination of Philip—Complicity of Olympias—Character of the Macedonian Sovereign.

IMMEDIATELY after the conclusion of the peace of 346 B.C., the Athenians began to repent that they had deserted the Phocians, and yielded so much to Philip of Macedon. Had there been any room for doubt before, it now became evident beyond question that Philip sought to make himself master of Greece, and that he had already advanced a considerable distance towards the accomplishment of that purpose. Macedon, which had been previously scorned as a land of barbarians, was admitted among the States of Greece, and by her own military strength had gained the foremost position. These were ominous facts, and the reputation of Demosthenes was greatly enhanced when it was remembered that he had warned his fellow-citizens of what would happen if they remained indifferent to the course of events, and had shown them how, by a greater manifestation of public spirit, by an increase of their forces, and by a dependence on their own military virtues, instead of on the services of hirelings, they might avoid the danger. In an equal degree, the promoters of the late peace were regarded with detestation, and the feeling against Philip himself was so strong that the Athenians omitted to send their usual deputation to the Pythian Games, because the Macedonian sovereign was to preside over them. For the present, however, any open rupture with the dominant Power would have been highly imprudent, and even Demosthenes, now that the peace had been concluded, advised that it should be strictly observed, so that no pretence should be given to the Amphictyons for declaring a conjoint war against Athens, with Philip for the executor of the federal judgment.

The time had not even then gone by, in the opinion of some, for retrieving the fortunes of Greece; but to others it appeared hopeless to struggle against the advancing wave of conquest. Such were the views of Phocion and of Æschines, to whom reference has already been made; such also was the view of Isocrates—a professional speech-writer like Demosthenes, and a man of remarkable powers, as well as great integrity. Isocrates was far advanced in years, and the despondency of age may have had much to do with his estimate of the capacity for freedom still existing among his countrymen. At any rate, he

made, in his "Oration to Philip," a formal renunciation of Hellenic independence; inviting the Macedonian conqueror to compose the differences of Athens, Sparta, Thebes, and Argos, to unite the entire forces of Hellas in a campaign against Persia, to liberate the Asiatic Greeks, and to provide new settlements for the multitudes of roving exiles who lived by the sword, and disturbed the peace of Hellas. Some of these very exiles, by the way, had just before been rendered homeless by Philip himself. Many of the Phocians had been driven into exile, and several of their number were received at Athens, partly, no doubt, from feelings of humanity, and partly as a protest against the hated despot of the North.

ÆSCHINES.

It is not, perhaps, difficult to hold the scales fairly between those who took a hopeful and those who took a despairing view of Grecian independence. The advice that all Greece should rise in defiance of the Macedonian soldier was the nobler and more patriotic course in the abstract, and it would probably have been the safest plan, had there still been virtue enough in the country to carry out such a determination. But it may be a question whether observers such as Phocion and Isocrates—men wanting neither in honesty nor discrimination, neither in patriotism nor courage—were not right in believing that their countrymen were no longer equal to such a task. Demosthenes told them that they had nothing to do but to reassert their old virtues, to call forth all their strength, and to unite against the common foe, and they would be certain to prevail. All this might have been granted by the more worthy of the orator's antagonists; but the question really was, whether the effort was now possible—whether, as a matter of fact, the existing race of Greeks had resolution and self-sacrifice enough to stand against the semi-barbarian hosts which were wielded as one man by the genius and energy of Philip. If they had not, it seems difficult to blame the counsel of those who warned them against a conflict to which in that case they were unequal. The perpetual divisions and jealousies of the Hellenes had wasted their strength; the prevalence of faction had disorganized their resources. Demosthenes saw all these things, but believed that a higher spirit and a more efficient order could be created by his impassioned appeals. Phocion saw nothing but frivolity and corruption in the Athenian citizens, and believed in no restoration of their decaying powers. Isocrates thought there was yet a great future for the Greek nationality, but considered that this could only be through unity, effected by the pressure of a military chieftain. Thirty-four years earlier—in 380 B.C.—he had suggested a Pan-Hellenic expedition against Asia, under the joint command of Athens and Sparta. Now, he looked to Philip of Macedon as the one practicable leader.

Philip certainly required no very urgent invitation to interfere more and more in the affairs of Greece; and a quarrel amongst the Peloponnesians soon gave him a fresh opportunity. In 352 B.C. the Spartans had invaded the territory of Megalopolis, the city founded by Epaminondas as the capital of the Arcadian Confederation. Fearing the greatly superior military power of their foe, the Megalopolitans requested assistance of the Argives, Sicyonians, and Messenians; they also sent an embassy to Athens, but without any success. The brunt of the war fell on the people

of Megalopolis itself, and on the Argives, until the Thebans despatched a force to the succour of the Arcadian allies. After many changing fortunes, Sparta gained a brilliant, and for the time decisive, victory; and hostilities were suspended in 351 B.C. The struggle was subsequently renewed, and was still raging when the Sacred War came to a close in 346 B.C. Shortly after the conquest of the Phocians, Philip turned his attention to the Peloponnesus, and began to send money and mercenary troops to the Argives and Messenians. Later on, he openly declared himself the protector of the Messenians, and the friend and ally of the Megalopolitans and Argives. Sparta was alarmed, and Demosthenes was sent into the Peloponnesus, to arrange, if possible, a combination against the Macedonian king. Nothing, however, was accomplished, and Philip was angered by an imprudent remark of the Athenian orator, to the effect that he had acted perfidiously. The result was that, in 344 B.C., he sent an embassy to Athens, to complain of what had been said; and this embassy was accompanied by agents from Argos and Messene, which thus completely identified themselves with the great monarchy of the North. The gravity of the situation appears to have had no other influence on Demosthenes than to increase the vehemence of his denunciations. While the Macedonian embassy was still at Athens, the Second Philippic was delivered; and its tone was even more unsparing than that of the First. Philip was described as an aggressor, seeking to establish his power in many quarters, violating the peace with Athens by seizing certain territories since the termination of the war, and plotting the ruin of all Greece. The Athenians were exhorted to organize defensive alliances with the Hellenes of other States, and a policy was advised which should unite watchfulness with caution. Either at this time, or at another not far distant, one of Philip's envoys, a Byzantine named Python, addressed the Athenian Assembly in a speech of considerable eloquence and ability, wherein he declared, with much emphasis, that his master earnestly desired to render services to Athens, and that he was willing to review and amend the terms of the late peace. This proposal was discussed with great closeness, and an agreement seemed to be nearly effected, when the refusal of Philip to ratify some of the more important details brought the negotiations to an end.

The Macedonian sovereign was unwearied in the prosecution of his ambitious schemes. In the course of 344 B.C. he overran Illyria, and annexed a large part of it to his dominions; then, entering Thessaly, he occupied Pheræ with a permanent garrison, and divided the whole country into four districts, over each of which he set an archon. His projects were vast, and, had he lived to old age, it is possible that he might have accomplished as much as his son Alexander. He contemplated attacking the Athenian colonies, and even dreamt of carrying his arms into the heart of the Persian Empire. For the realization of such designs it was necessary that he should possess a naval force not altogether disproportioned to his large and effective army; and considerable time was given to the creation of such a fleet. In the spring of 342 B.C., Philip started on an expedition against Thrace. Pursuing his victorious career, he menaced the Greek cities of the Propontis, and the settlements in the Chersonese. An Athenian force was then stationed in the peninsula, and the troops of the Republic came into collision with those of Philip. Shortly afterwards, Diopithes, the Athenian commander in the North, invaded that part of Thrace which had already submitted to Macedonia, and acted with a good deal of violence and bad faith, even seizing a Macedonian envoy who had come to treat for the release of some prisoners, and refusing to dismiss him without a ransom. It was very unfortunate for the Grecian cause that these acts should have been committed, for they gave the Macedonians a just ground of complaint. Philip sent a letter of remonstrance to Athens, but without obtaining any satisfaction. On the contrary, Demosthenes made a speech "On the Chersonese" in the course of 341 B.C., and again urged his countrymen to resistance. His Third Philippic followed soon after. The Athenians, however, were not excited to action, while Philip himself must have been confirmed in his intentions by the exhibition of so strong a hostile feeling. The Greek cities north-east of the Hellespont were next assailed. Selymbria, on the northern shore of the Propontis, was besieged and captured, and Philip then brought his forces to bear on Perinthus, a town situated on a lofty promontory west of Selymbria, well fortified, and built on a series of terraces, rising in successive stages from the sea. Nature and art had alike contributed to the strength of Perinthus; but Philip considered it a sufficiently valuable prize to be worthy of a strenuous effort.

The Macedonian king attacked the city both with his army and his fleet, but was encountered by greater difficulties than he had anticipated. By means of his powerful siege train, which was of superior character to any that had previously been used, he battered down the outer wall, only to find himself in presence of a fresh rampart formed by

the higher tier of buildings. Nevertheless, he still persevered in the attempt; but the citizens were afterwards assisted both by the Byzantines and the Persians, who managed to send in a constant supply of arms and provisions. The Persians are thought to have been instigated to this policy by the Athenians; but it is probable that the Asiatic monarch dreaded the extraordinary advances now being made by the Macedonians, and looked with apprehension on the establishment of a great military power on the northern side of the Propontis, from which his own possessions on the southern shore might be easily threatened. Thus aided, the Perinthians were able to check the attacks of Philip, and he therefore abandoned the siege to his subordinates, and to a portion of his army, while he himself, with the remainder of the forces, marched to Byzantium, the reduction of which would give him an important position at the very gates of Asia. In the course of the same year (341 B.C.), the Athenians sent an expedition to Eubœa, for the purpose of counteracting Macedonian influence in that island. The enterprise was prompted by Demosthenes, and Phocion was the commander of the army. Being supported by Callias of Chalcis, Phocion soon overthrew the local despots who had been set up by Philip, and the island was recovered for Athens. The advice of Demosthenes had this time been attended by a solid benefit, and the Athenians, in their gratitude, voted him a golden crown. Good fortune also attended a naval expedition into the Gulf of Pagasæ, where a number of coast towns were reduced, and several Macedonian merchantmen fell into the hands of the assailants. While these acts of hostility were occurring from day to day, Athens and Macedon were still nominally at peace; but it was obvious that such a condition could not be much prolonged.

The feeling of mutual antagonism had been deepening for some time past, and each of the opponents had legitimate ground of complaint against the other. Philip was undoubtedly labouring to extend his power over the whole of Greece, and was doing so by a series of acts which combined open violence with covert deceit. On the other hand, Athens had adopted a policy of provocation, rather than of strong and dignified resistance; and the proceedings of Diopithes in Thrace were certainly unjust, and calculated to move the wrath of any sovereign power. For those outrages, Philip had been unable to obtain redress, and he now found himself injured by acts of war committed by a State which professed to be at peace with his own. In 340 B.C., he despatched a manifesto to the Athenians, complaining of the aggressions by which, as he alleged, they had violated the treaty, and concluding with an announcement which in effect amounted to a declaration of war. To this manifesto, Demosthenes replied by vehement appeals to his countrymen to accept the challenge thus thrown down. The martial spirit of the Athenians was at length aroused; a decree for war passed the Assembly, and an armament of one hundred and twenty triremes was voted for the prosecution of hostilities. The islands of Cos, Rhodes, and Chios, were persuaded to join the Athenians in supporting Byzantium, and the King of Persia was induced to send an auxiliary force to the same spot. The spirit of patriotism, however, was by no means general in Greece. The Peloponnesians, Eubœans, and Acarnanians declined to form a general coalition against Macedon; yet the resolution of the Athenians suffered no abatement on that account. In the spring of 339 B.C., Demosthenes proposed and carried a law authorising the destruction of the pillar on which had been engraved the terms of the peace concluded in 346. The expedition to Byzantium was entrusted to Chares, a man of no great ability, but of a corrupt and despotic nature, who exasperated his allies by the heavy exactions which he laid upon them. The sufferers from these extortionate proceedings made their complaints known at Athens, where the members of the Macedonian party used them as a means of discrediting the war.

As a commander, Chares was far from successful, and he was ultimately superseded by Phocion, a general of vigour and capacity, and a man of the highest honour and benevolence. The character of the war immediately changed on the arrival of this commander at Byzantium. Philip was compelled to raise the siege both of that city and of Perinthus, and ultimately to evacuate the Thracian Chersonese. The Bosphorus and the Hellespont were thus once more open to the Athenian corn-ships, and the martial enterprise of Philip was turned in another direction. The communities rescued from his grasp voted thanks to Athens, and a colossal statue in her honour was erected in Byzantium. It was to the vast and desert region of Scythia that Philip now directed his armies—first as the ally of one of the local kings, and next as his enemy, in consequence of an insult he had received. After defeating the barbarians on the northern banks of the Danube, he returned southwards with 20,000 prisoners, an immense number of fine horses, and a rich booty. While passing through the territory of the Thracian Triballi, those people demanded a share of the spoil, and, on being refused, assailed

the Macedonians so furiously as to inflict on them a very serious defeat. Philip himself was badly wounded in the thigh, and was saved from death only by the valour of his son Alexander, then about seventeen years of age. The whole conduct of the army was for a time thrown into the hands of this youthful hero, who gave proofs of his future greatness in the skill with which he rescued his father's discomfited legions from complete ruin, and conducted them from the territory of their enemies. The object of Philip in entering Scythia was probably to divert the attention of the Greeks, and to induce them to suppose that his schemes were now centred in the extreme North. Before setting out, he had secured the neutrality of Byzantium, and of other maritime States, by the apparent fairness of his overtures for peace; and to many it may have seemed that his policy had undergone a radical change.

TEMPLE OF POSEIDON AT KALAUNA. (*Scene of the death of Demosthenes.*)

The Macedonian sovereign, however, had by no means relinquished his designs on Hellas. He was watchfully observant from afar, and events soon favoured the projects which he still entertained in secret. Another Sacred War broke out in 339 B.C., owing to some disagreements between the Athenians and the Locrians of Amphissa with reference to certain acts of sacrilege. A charge against the Locrians was brought forward by

Æschines in the Amphictyonic Council at Delphi, in reply to an accusation on their part, that the Athenians themselves had committed some irregularity at Delphi. The Locrians had been strongly opposed to the Phocians during the recent war, and it must have surprised them to be taxed with an offence similar to that for which the Phocians had been so severely punished. It appeared, however, that the town of Cirrha, which, with its territory, was devoted to Apollo after the First Sacred War, had been seized by the Locrians of Amphissa, who were accordingly held to have been guilty of the serious offence of cultivating ground which was to lie waste perpetually, as the peculiar possession of the god. Some buildings which the Amphissians had erected at Cirrha were destroyed; but, before the Delphians and the agents of the Amphictyonic Council could quit the scene of their exploit, the people of Amphissa made an attack on them, which, although conducted with so much moderation as not to entail any loss of life, was regarded as a fresh offence. The Amphictyons resolved to summon a full meeting of their body at Thermopylæ, in order that the nature of the punishment might be solemnly debated. It is sometimes supposed that Æschines acted on this occasion as the tool of Philip, whom he desired to furnish with an excuse for renewed interference in the domestic administration of Greece. As, however, Æschines appears to have spoken in a moment of passion, provoked by the charges against Athens which the Locrians had advanced, this imputation is scarcely justified by facts. Demosthenes nevertheless considered that his great antagonist had followed an unpatriotic course, and charged him in the Assembly with bringing an Amphictyonic war into Attica. The religious sentiment of the Athenians was deeply outraged by the conduct of the Locrians; yet Demosthenes was able, by the prodigious force of his oratory, to procure the issuing of a decree forbidding any Athenian to attend the Council at Thermopylæ. The same course was also taken by the Thebans, whose sympathies were on the side of the Locrians. All the other Grecian States were represented at the special meeting of the Amphictyons; war was declared against the people of Amphissa, and an army was despatched to execute the judgment of the Council. Whether the operations of this army were successful or not is a matter involved in some obscurity; but at the next ordinary meeting of the Amphictyons, which was probably in the early part of 338 B.C.,* it was considered necessary to take further measures, and advisable to place the conduct of those measures in the hands of Philip of Macedon himself. This was done with the sanction of Æschines, who, whatever his earlier motives may have been, was now undoubtedly acting as the supporter of the Macedonian king.

Philip had by this time recovered from his wound, and, marching southwards in the spring, he took Nicæa, a town commanding Thermopylæ, and held by the Thebans. Shortly afterwards, instead of moving in the direction of Amphissa, he seized and fortified the city of Elatea, in the eastern part of Phocis. It thus became apparent that his real design was against Bœotia and Attica, and the utmost consternation prevailed at Athens when the fact was known. The city was prepared as if for an immediate siege, and an assembly of the whole people was hastily convened for the following day. A statement had reached Athens that Philip, abandoning his usual policy of dissimulation, had openly invited the Thebans to unite with him in crushing the Athenians, and with that view had requested them to grant him a passage through their territory into Attica. In the popular Assembly at Athens, Demosthenes, who was the only speaker on this occasion, discredited the assertions, and urged an alliance with Thebes as the only hope of safety. Ten envoys were accordingly appointed to proceed to Thebes, and Demosthenes himself was of the number. Philip, however, had really made advances to the Thebans, so that it was only with the utmost difficulty that Demosthenes and his companions succeeded in persuading the people to shut their gates against the Macedonians. In the end, an agreement was effected, and Philip, finding his plans checkmated with respect to Thebes, proceeded towards Amphissa, and at the same time despatched a manifesto to his allies in the Peloponnesus, requiring their assistance in the prosecution of a religious war.

The hollowness of the pretence was so apparent that Philip obtained little or no help from the States to which he had addressed himself. The Athenians and Thebans, acting in hearty alliance, conducted a campaign in Phocis, which was attended by some successful results, apparently including two defeats of Philip, sufficiently grave to induce him to make proposals of peace, which the Thebans would have accepted, but which Demosthenes persuaded them to reject. By a series of combined movements, the independence of the Phocian cities was restored, and the Athenians again voted a golden crown to Demosthenes. For a while the cause of the allies seemed prospering;

* Mr. Grote supposes this meeting, and some of the ensuing events previous to the battle of Chæronea, to have happened in 339 B.C.; but such is not the general view.

but the gleam of good fortune was only transient. The details of the war are exceedingly confused, and its events have been related in different order by several historians. But it would appear that Philip, after finally abandoning his designs with respect to Thebes, marched upon Amphissa, defeated the army by which he was opposed, and executed the decree of the Amphictyons. Then, turning eastward, he passed through Phocis into Bœotia, just within the borders of which country he encountered the united forces of the Greeks on the ever-memorable plain of Chæronea.

The relative proportions of the contending armies are not precisely known. Under the command of Philip were 30,000 infantry and 2,000 cavalry, and he had probably some auxiliaries from Thessaly and other parts of Northern Greece. The strength of the Athenians and their allies may possibly have been inferior, though the fact is not certain. Demosthenes, who was the life and soul of the whole enterprise, had done his utmost to procure reinforcements, and had met with varying responses, according as patriotism or prudence was the stronger motive. There was a general indisposition to support Philip, but in many places an equal disinclination to run the risk of opposing him. Nevertheless, the ranks of the Athenians and Thebans were augmented by contingents from Phocis, Achaia, and Corinth, and perhaps also from Eubœa, Megara, and Corcyra. The chief Athenian commanders were Chares and Lysicles; the Theban general was Theagenes; and the direction of all the Grecian forces was divided amongst these three. Unfortunately, their military talents were of a very humble order. In Demosthenes, who accompanied the army, they had an adviser of the greatest intellectual power; but he was not a soldier, and it was always possible that his enthusiasm would lead him into acts of imprudence. Phocion, who might have sustained the martial renown of Athens, was absent on other service; and Thebes had produced no second Epaminondas or Pelopidas. The spirits of the army, moreover, had, as was often the case with the Greeks, been chilled by adverse omens; and prophecies were in circulation, of a nature to discourage the patriots. Demosthenes, indeed, even accused the Delphian priestess of "Philippising;" and, as the Macedonian sovereign had carried his arms into the sacred territory, and twice acted as the champion of Apollo, the charge seems highly probable. Such were the depressing circumstances under which the Greeks met their adversaries on the 7th of August, 338 B.C.

Having regard to its results, the battle of Chæronea is one of the most interesting in ancient history; but we have not much information respecting its details. Philip himself was in command of the Macedonians on the wing opposed to the Athenians, while the other wing obeyed the directions of Alexander (then eighteen years of age), and of several experienced officers. The fighting was desperate and well sustained. For a long while the result was doubtful, and the Athenians even believed that they were about to secure the victory. Their onset was so impetuous that some of the troops under the immediate command of Philip were put to flight. It is related by Polyænus (but the anecdote is surrounded by some doubt) that one of the Athenian officers exclaimed, in the animation of the moment, "Let us pursue them even to Macedonia!" His hopeful anticipations, however, were doomed to a cruel disappointment. Philip is said to have resorted to the stratagem of a false retreat when he saw the gravity of his situation, and thus to have drawn the Athenians too far from their comrades. At any rate, they lost their energy and enthusiasm after prolonged fighting, and, at length becoming exhausted while their better-disciplined adversaries were still comparatively fresh, began to recede. Seeing that the moment for attack had come, Philip now bore down on the Athenian ranks, and scattered them in irretrievable rout. At the same time, the Thebans were equally discomfited in another part of the field. The youthful Alexander had again exhibited the military genius and fiery ardour which already distinguished him, and his cavalry did terrible execution among the masses of the enemy. The fortune of the day was to a great extent decided by the failure of the Sacred Band of Thebes to overcome the solid Macedonian phalanx, with its bristling array of pikes. The inferiority of the Theban phalanx, which had done wonders in the hands of Epaminondas, was thus conclusively proved. All of the Sacred Band were slain as they stood; the rest of the Theban phalanx was dispersed; and Philip remained master of the blood-stained field.

The loss on the part of the Greeks was fearful, although Philip, directly the victory was secured, gave orders to stop the slaughter. One thousand Athenians were slain in the combat; two thousand more were taken prisoners. The Thebans and the Achæans also suffered in no slight measure, though the precise extent of their loss is unknown. Many of the Macedonians must likewise have been killed; but the figures are not preserved. The final repulse of the Grecian allies seems to have had all the character of a rout, and Demos-

thenes, who served in the ranks, is accused—perhaps unjustly—of having exhibited disgraceful cowardice. The two Athenian generals, Chares and Lysicles, escaped with their lives, and the latter was afterwards condemned to death by the Dicastery, though Chares does not seem to have been even tried. Vague charges of treason were subsequently brought against the Theban general, Theagenes; but, inasmuch as he perished in the battle, it would appear that such imputations were groundless. The Thebans who fell in a comic Iambic verse. This disgraceful exhibition (if, indeed, the story be true) was doubtless the result of intoxication, acting at a moment of intense mental excitement; for, when his drunken fit had passed off, Philip behaved towards his principal adversaries with a degree of generosity not often exhibited by monarchs in the hour of triumph. The Athenian prisoners were dismissed without ransom, with all their baggage, and, in some instances, with new apparel. Peace was then offered to the Athenians on advantageous terms.

THE THEBANS AND MACEDONIANS AT CHÆRONEA.

the great struggle were buried on the spot, and a lion carved in stone was erected over the tumulus. Some five centuries later, this lion was seen by the traveller Pausanias when he visited Chæronea; but it afterwards disappeared, and was not discovered until modern times, when the mound was excavated, and the sculpture, in a broken state, was found deeply embedded in the earth.

The conduct of Philip after his great victory was marked by the inconsistencies belonging to the man's whole character. In the first place, he feasted himself and his officers at a grand banquet, and, after drinking to excess, danced over the dead bodies as they lay about the field, singing, with extravagant gesticulations, some words of Demosthenes which happened to fall into the rhythm of Some portion of their foreign dependencies they were, indeed, required to give up; but the territory of Oropus—a town on the borders of Attica, which had long been a subject of contention—was transferred from Thebes to Athens, as a species of compensation. The Thebans, however, were treated with much less consideration, because, in the estimation of Philip, they had broken faith with him. The captives belonging to their ranks were sold into slavery. Several of the leading citizens were put to death; others were deprived of their property, and banished. It was stipulated that the political exiles should be restored, and, when this was done, the government of the city was placed in their hands. Thebes was deprived of her sovereignty over the Bœotian towns, and a Mace-

donian garrison was established in the Cadmea, as a guarantee for the performance of what had been exacted from the vanquished. Nevertheless, Philip, immediately after the battle of Chæronea, expressed the highest admiration of the Sacred Band of Thebes. On visiting the field the morning after the conflict, and therefore with a head which had in some degree recovered from the previous night's carouse, he burst into tears at seeing the dead bodies of those heroes lying where they had fallen with their faces to the enemy, and exclaimed, "Perish they who imagine any evil of these men!" Yet he is said to have required a money payment for permission to bury the Theban slain.

When the news of the defeat reached Athens, the people were for a time prostrate with grief and apprehension. Before the precise details could be known, it was feared that the entire army had perished on the field; but when the prisoners returned, a better spirit prevailed, and energetic measures were taken for the defence of the city, should it be attacked. It was ordered that the Piræus should be defended; that every man, without a single exception, should be placed at the disposal of the generals; that the penalties of treason should be imposed on those who might attempt to fly; and that all slaves fit to bear arms should be enfranchised. Demosthenes was appointed member of a special board for superintending the fortifications, and new works of defence were rapidly executed by the labour and money of the citizens. Every consideration was subordinated to the overwhelming necessity of saving Athens from the Macedonian, and envoys were despatched to numerous places, to solicit aid and collect money. These measures may have increased the readiness of Philip to grant favourable terms of peace. He may also have yielded somewhat to the solicitations of Æschines, who had for some time past acted as his friend, and who was permitted by his fellow-citizens to go as envoy to the Macedonian camp. At any rate, proposals were made by Philip, and readily accepted by the Athenian Assembly, though they involved the humiliation of acknowledging the Macedonian sovereign as head of Greece. The Athenians were likewise required to promote the same acknowledgment by all the other Greeks, in a congress to be specially convened; and they were to renounce any future pretension to headship, not only for themselves, but for every Grecian State. The degradation implied in these demands was extreme, considering all that Athens, and Sparta, and Thebes, had been in former times; yet it can

THE BANQUET OF PHILIP.

hardly be doubted that the feeling of relief on the part of the Athenians was even greater than the feeling of shame.

The sentiments of Philip in this matter have not always been fairly estimated. It is easy to say that he might have been defeated in an attack on Athens, and that therefore his motives were rather politic than generous. But Athens had been taken both by the Persians and the Spartans, and successful generals do not usually distrust their power of commanding fortune. Philip, it is true, was a clever diplomatist, as well as a brilliant soldier; and he may have preferred a pacific arrangement with the Athenians to prolonged hostilities. Yet, considering his enormous power, and the extreme depression existing at Athens immediately after the defeat at Chæronea—considering also that in a few days Philip might have been outside the walls of Athens, before there was time to improve its fortifications—it seems unfair to deny that some element of magnanimity entered into his conduct to the foe whom he had so signally worsted. Men generally forgive injuries sooner than insults; and it must not be forgotten that for several years Philip had been made the subject of exasperating diatribes on the part of Demosthenes. One thing appears certain—that the Philippising party in Athens was numerous, and included some men of the highest character, as well as others whose motives were corrupt. We may fairly suppose that, all over Greece, thousands were sick of the perpetual divisions and civil wars of former years. It was felt that the strength of the country had been wasted by internal broils, often of the most purposeless character, and always attended by cruelty, rapine, and exhaustion. Had Greece been capable of a unity proceeding from herself, it would have been a better thing than unity imposed from without. But, in the absence of any such spontaneous coalition, it may have seemed to many persons, not necessarily traitors or fools, that a sovereign of Greek ancestry, though of alien birth, might give the jarring Greek world the repose and organization which it did in truth require. After all, we must do Philip the justice to admit that, on the worst interpretation of his motives, he was doing no more than Athens, Sparta, and Thebes had done in turn. He was seeking to impose his will despotically on the individual States; but there had been no period of Grecian history since the primitive days when some Grecian community was not endeavouring to do the same.

Still, whatever the strength of the Philippising party at Athens, it is probable that the opponents of a Macedonian policy were more numerous; and this for reasons which were creditable to the national spirit. Although the plans of Demosthenes had led to an appalling disaster, the orator himself continued to enjoy the respect and confidence of a large number of his fellow-citizens. He still retained important offices in the State, and was selected to pronounce the funeral oration over those who had fallen at Chæronea, with the full concurrence of the relatives. He was, indeed, bitterly attacked by the orators of the peace-party; but his position in the general esteem suffered little or no abatement. Many of the noblest spirits in Athens felt a profound dejection at the calamity which had befallen the Republic. Demosthenes, being still in the full vigour of manhood, was enabled to bear up against this patriotic sorrow; but his master, Isocrates, who had been born under the administration of Pericles, and who had now attained his ninety-ninth year, could not survive the national disgrace. After four days' abstinence from food, he expired under the heavy cloud of affliction which had darkened the fortunes of his country. His fate is the more remarkable because he had at one time been on intimate terms with Philip of Macedon, and had conducted a friendly correspondence with him. When the personal designs of Philip became too obvious for doubt, Isocrates joined the opponents of that monarch, and his self-imposed death is sufficient proof that affection for his native city was never wanting in his character. Few Athenians bear a higher reputation for integrity and moral excellence than Isocrates. Great as an orator himself, he was the intellectual father of many others; and it is impossible not to regret that his life should have been prolonged to an unusual extent, only that he might witness the degradation of his country, and the failure of his hopes.

The freedom of the Grecian States was now at an end. Some nominal independence might yet be left to the several States; but Philip of Macedon was the actual dictator, whose will no one could successfully dispute. The next great project of this restless conqueror was an attack upon the Persian monarchy, and for such a purpose he required the assistance of the Greeks. He therefore convened a congress of the Hellenic States at Corinth, of which the ostensible object was a settlement of the affairs of Greece, though the real, or at least the most important, design was an organization of forces for the contemplated inroad into Asia. Philip had little reason to doubt the results of this congress, for the master of successful legions is also the master of arguments which few will venture to withstand. He had already secured

a certain amount of support at Athens (however poignant the general sentiment of grief at the ruin of the commonwealth) by his restoration of the captives, and the other favourable characteristics of the peace. The Athenians had even passed honorary and complimentary votes to the Macedonian sovereign, and the prospect of a Persian war may not have been unpleasing to the countrymen of Miltiades. The Lacedæmonians were quite unable to resist; for, a little before the meeting of the congress, Philip had made an expedition into the Peloponnesus, had reduced the Spartan territory, and had compelled the Corinthians, and other communities of the peninsula, to acknowledge his dominion. The congress at Corinth, which was held in 337 B.C., was entirely favourable to the designs of Philip, as indeed might have been anticipated. Sparta, which had resolutely declined to make submission to the foreign power, although incapable of active opposition in the field, abstained from sending any ambassador to the council; but all the other States were present in the persons of their deputies, and they simply registered the conclusions at which Philip had previously arrived. The king announced his determination to conduct an expedition against Persia, in order that he might liberate the Asiatic Greeks, and avenge the invasion of Hellas by Xerxes. For this purpose, the congress nominated him leader of the united Greeks, and decreed that a Grecian force should be formed of contingents furnished by the various cities. The Athenians were required to provide a fleet, and the islands previously belonging to the Athenian confederacy were thenceforward enrolled as maritime dependencies of Philip. The loss of these islands was deplored by the Athenians as the deepest mortification they had yet suffered; but Phocion reminded them that it was a necessary result of the peace, and that it was now too late to object. The whole of Greece, therefore, was committed to a war with Persia, under the direction of the king of Macedon; and the conqueror of Chæronea, having obtained the formal authorization he wanted, returned to his own country, that the necessary preparations might be made. On his way, he received the submission of the western States north of the Isthmus of Corinth, and extorted from Byzantium a treaty which gave him full power over that prosperous city.

After his return to Macedon, Philip was for a time engaged in military operations against the Illyrian king Pleurias; but, in the spring of 336 B.C., the vanguard of the Macedonian army was sent over to Asia, and Philip himself hoped to follow before long. For the present, however, he was engaged in domestic affairs of a distressing nature. Olympias, the wife of Philip, had long stood in a position of antagonism towards her husband. Like Philip himself, she was of Greek race, even claiming descent from Achilles; and her nature was haughty, imperious, and vindictive. It was believed that she engaged in necromantic practices, and loved to have tame snakes playing about her. She was certainly addicted to the orgies of the Dionysiac worship, and it was at a celebration of those mysteries in the island of Samothrace that Philip first met her. A wild element, touching on the borders of insanity, seems to have existed in the blood of both, and their married life was as unhappy as such a union could not fail to be. For some years, Philip had allowed himself the Oriental license of polygamy, and the last of his wives was Cleopatra, the beautiful niece of Attalus, one of his generals. By this woman he was induced to repudiate Olympias, on an allegation of infidelity; and she retired to the court of her brother, Alexander of Epirus. Her son, afterwards Alexander the Great, was incensed against his father for thus acting, and the court was divided into two rival factions, who supported the causes of the two queens. The banquet which followed the wedding with Cleopatra was attended by a painful incident. The company were already far gone in their carouse when Attalus invoked the gods to bless the union they were then celebrating with a legitimate heir to the throne. Alexander was naturally enraged at this reflection on himself and his mother, and, hurling his goblet at Attalus, he exclaimed, "Do you, then, proclaim *me* a bastard?" Upon this, Philip started up from his couch, and rushed, sword in hand, towards his son, but fell to the ground through the effects of intoxication. Alexander withdrew from the banqueting hall with the sneering remark, "Here is the man who was about to pass from Europe into Asia, but who has been overthrown in going from one couch to another!" A rupture between father and son was the inevitable consequence of this incident. The young prince betook himself to the Illyrian king, and, although a reconciliation was effected some months afterwards, it soon gave way to a fresh quarrel.

In the course of 336 B.C., a son was born to Philip by his last wife, Cleopatra. Seeing the necessity of keeping on good terms with Alexander of Epirus, Philip gave him his daughter in marriage, and both Olympias and her son returned once more to Pella, the Macedonian capital. To celebrate the marriage of Philip's daughter with the Epirote sovereign, magnificent entertainments

were given by the King of Macedon at Ægæ, the more ancient metropolis. All the Grecian cities sent deputies to offer their congratulations. Statues of the twelve great gods were carried in solemn procession into the theatre, and immediately after them came the statue of Philip himself, as a thirteenth god. It was hoped by all this splendour to re-establish friendly sentiments between Macedonia and Epirus—between Philip himself and his first wife; but, whatever may have been the external show of amity, a dark and evil cloud of passion still overshadowed the minds both of Olympias and her son. Another secret enemy was also at hand, in the person of a youth named Pausanias, who had conceived a feeling of resentment against the king, because he had omitted to redress an injury of which Pausanias complained. This youth was one of the royal body-guards, and the person he accused was no other than Attalus, the uncle of Cleopatra, whom Philip did not wish to disoblige. It is said that, on imparting his grievances to Olympias and Alexander, they suggested to him—though perhaps covertly—the revenge he afterwards took. Be that as it may, Pausanias resolved to murder the king as he entered the theatre together with the procession of statues which ranked him among the Olympian gods. Philip advanced unarmed, and, not having the least suspicion of danger, bid his guards stand back. He was dressed in white robes, with a chaplet on his head; and a little behind him walked his son and his new son-in-law. Pausanias was standing near, with a long Gallic sword concealed under his garments; and suddenly rushing upon the king, he plunged the weapon into his side. As Philip sank dying to the ground, Pausanias took to flight, and endeavoured to reach the gates, where horses had been stationed in readiness for him. He was of course pursued, and, his foot striking against some vine-stocks, he fell, and was immediately despatched by the men-at-arms.

Thus perished Philip of Macedon, at the early age of forty-seven. Whether his son was in any degree instrumental in his tragical end is a matter of doubt; but the complicity of Olympias is highly probable. Pausanias must have had some accomplices, and the vindictive nature of Olympias, taken in combination with the indignities she had suffered, leaves us little room to question that she knew what was intended, and was not disinclined that it should take place. It is recorded that she showed the most extravagant and indecent satisfaction at her husband's decease. The body of Philip's assassin had been crucified immediately after his death; but Justin affirms that, subsequently to the obsequies of Philip, Olympias took down and burned the corpse of Pausanias (after placing a golden crown upon the head), provided for it a sepulchral monument, with an annual ceremony of commemoration, and consecrated the murderer's sword to Apollo.* There were circumstances, however, which reflected on the young prince as well as on his mother. One of three brothers who are believed to have been in the conspiracy was the first to salute Alexander as king, and the new monarch always showed the highest gratitude towards this man, who bore the same name as himself. Attalus, who was with the forces in Asia, was speedily put to death; so also were Cleopatra and her child. Some ancient authors relate that the young queen and her infant were despatched by Olympias, under circumstances of the most diabolical cruelty; but, as the details vary, we may perhaps hope that the facts were not so bad as the worst accounts give forth.

The character of Philip has been diversely judged by different historians. By some he has been condemned, with scarcely any mitigation in the severity of the sentence; by others again he has been unduly exalted. With respect to his abilities as a monarch and a soldier, it may be safely pronounced that he was one of the most remarkable men in ancient history. He found Macedonia, at his accession, a poor and insignificant kingdom; he left it the greatest monarchy in Europe, and in a condition to cope successfully with the vast military power of Persia. The means by which he had effected these results were in many respects incapable of justification. Philip was crafty and perfidious, and, though at times generous and humane, was at others stern even to cruelty. But it must be recollected that he lived in days when military success was considered the greatest fact in the world, and when, with a few exceptions, men were not scrupulous in the methods by which their purposes were achieved. In these matters he was no worse than hundreds of others; he was better than some. That he was beloved by his own subjects, excepting by a faction towards the latter end of his life, seems to be generally admitted, and it is not to be denied that in several instances, though not in all, he showed moderation and magnanimity in the hour of triumph. Of his justice, several instances are related. On one occasion, a poor woman, whose plea he had repeatedly set aside on the ground that he had not time to attend to it, exclaimed, "If you have no leisure

*History Book IX., Chap. 7.

to do right, cease to be a king." Philip at once heard her case, and gave her redress. Another time, having, when under the influence of wine, decided against a female suppliant, the suitor cried, "I appeal." "To whom?" demanded Philip. "To Philip sober," replied the woman; and the king reconsidered his judgment, and retracted it. Facts such as these lift the Macedonian conqueror above the common herd of despots.

His personal character, apart from affairs of state, was a strange and contradictory admixture. He had a genuine love of intellectual culture and artistic refinement; yet his habits were occasionally those of a savage. He drank to excess, and allowed himself the most unbridled licentiousness of conduct. Like many a royal conqueror, his will was pampered by success, and his end was hastened by personal imprudences which involved a selfish disregard of others. It cannot be said that Philip of Macedon presents a grand or noble figure for the admiration of posterity; yet, in condemning his vices, we must not forget his virtues—his resolution, his strength of purpose, his masterly command of circumstances, and his frequent, if capricious, clemency. There are few more conspicuous or interesting characters in the Grecian world than his, and his life forms an epoch in the annals of that race from which he was descended, and which it was his fate to bring into a subjection not altogether unheralded by its own inherent faults.

CHAPTER XLIV.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

Early Years of Alexander the Great—Leading Features of his Character—The Horse Bucephalus—Exultation of Demosthenes on hearing of the Assassination of Philip—Impolitic Conduct of the Former—Rapid Movements of Alexander—Consternation in Greece, and Submission of the Athenians—Congress at Corinth—Appointment of Alexander as Imperator of the Greeks—Expeditions against the Triballi, Getæ, Illyrians, and other Tribes—Terms of the Convention with the Grecian States—Oppressions of Alexander and his Officers—Questionable Conduct of Demosthenes—Rumoured Death of Alexander—Revolt at Thebes—Sudden Appearance of Alexander Outside the City—Capture of Thebes, with Dreadful Slaughter—General Terror and Submission in Greece—Danger of Demosthenes and other Athenians—Preparations for the Persian Expedition—Composition of the Invading Army—Removal of the Forces from Pella to the Thracian Chersonese—Crossing of the Straits into Asia—Religious Observances of Alexander—The Forward March—Military State of the Persian Empire—Battle of the Granicus—Reduction of Halicarnassus—Continued Successes of Alexander—The "Gordian Knot"—Submission of Paphlagonia—Anti-Macedonian Movements in Greece—Position of the Persians—Illness of Alexander—Advance from Cilicia into Syria—The Eve of a Great Struggle.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT (as he was subsequently called) was about twenty years of age when his father, Philip of Macedon, fell before the sword of Pausanias. After he had become illustrious and powerful, there were flatterers who declared that the actual father of the young king was Jupiter, and that the god was accustomed to visit Olympias in the form of a serpent, or dragon. The frantic orgies in which that extraordinary woman used to indulge, her devotion to magic rites, and her love of tame snakes—which in her Bacchanalian transports would wreathe themselves round the ivy wherewith she was decked, and the javelin she carried in her hand—may have given rise to this report, which at any rate was believed by many, and is even said to have been propagated by herself. Portents were of course not wanting to the birth of Alexander. It was affirmed that the burning of the temple of Ephesus took place the very same day that the future conqueror first saw the light, and that the priests, magicians, and soothsayers of the Ionian city ran up and down the streets, smiting their faces, and crying out that some great mischief, prefigured by the conflagration, had just been born to Asia.*

We have seen that, on the side of both parents, Alexander was of Greek origin, though at the distance of several generations. His mother was proud of her supposed descent from the primitive national hero, Achilles, and a feeling of Hellenism was impressed on the young prince from his earliest years. A relation of Olympias, named Leonidas, gave him his first instructions, and endeavoured to form his habits on the severe model of the Spartans. Another of his teachers—Lysimachus of Acarnania—imbued his mind with ideas derived from the "Iliad," and even called him by the name of Achilles, as if to create a feeling of emulation

* Plutarch: Life of Alexander the Great.

of the exploits attributed to that demi-god. At a later period, Alexander was confided by his father to the care of Aristotle, whom Philip invited to his court expressly for that purpose. He had the benefit of associating with the great philosopher for about three years—from the age of thirteen to that of sixteen; and it is related that he conceived a strong affection for his preceptor, who doubtless enlarged his intellect, and developed the power of ready utterance which he may in some degree have inherited from his father. Thus we see that the main influences which shaped the character of Alexander were Hellenic. When Æschines, Desmothenes, and the other ambassadors, went to Pella to treat about peace, the young prince, then in his tenth year, entertained them with recitations of poetry, comprising, in association with another boy, a dialogue out of one of the Greek dramas. Even in the full excitement of his campaigns, Alexander preserved an interest in the brilliant literature of Athens, and always carried with him a copy of the "Iliad," corrected by Aristotle.

It was at sixteen years of age that the future king first entered into public life. This was in 340 B.C., when he was left at home as regent while Philip was engaged in the sieges of Perinthus and Byzantium. When thus exercising sovereign power, Alexander suppressed the revolt of a neighbouring Thracian tribe, and, having taken one of the towns, re-named it after himself. He was with his father in the expedition against the Scythians, and, as we have seen, distinguished himself in the unfortunate encounter with the Triballi, when Philip was so severely wounded. His courage and capacity contributed largely to the decisive success at Chæronea; and the father had every reason to be proud of a son who was manifestly destined to extend the glories of the Macedonian kingdom. The painful quarrels to which allusion has already been made, and which proceeded from the dissensions existing between Philip and Olympias, did not involve any distrust by the former as to the remarkable abilities of his heir. While the prince was still a youth, the soldiers had been in the habit of saying that Alexander was their king, and Philip their general; and Philip had not been offended at the distinction. Alexander was, in truth, monarch and warrior in equal proportions. He refused to contend at the Olympic Games unless he could have kings for his competitors; and when he heard of his father's victories as a commander, he deplored that nothing would be left for him to accomplish. His dislike of athletic sports went further than a mere sentiment of haughtiness, and seems to have been general and deeply rooted. It probably appeared to him, as it did to many others in the ancient world, that an excessive devotion to such pursuits (and nothing has a greater tendency to run into excess) distracts the attention from more serious work, and is in fact a wasteful expenditure of energy. In other respects, the character of Alexander presented several of the good and bad qualities that distinguished his father. Valour was one of its leading characteristics, and this resulted in the mastery which leads to supreme dominion. The wild horse Bucephalus, which others feared, was subdued by the youthful Alexander in a manner which showed equal boldness, humanity, and knowledge of brute character. Bucephalus continued to be the hero's charger until he died of old age and wounds after an engagement in India. It is said that he always knelt down for the king to mount him, and poets and historians have commemorated his fame.

The new sovereign of Macedon succeeded to a troubled inheritance. Several of the subject States considered that it would not be a difficult matter to throw off the yoke of so young and inexperienced a prince, and Athens in particular cherished hopes of a speedy deliverance. Demosthenes had received private information of the death of Philip, and he stooped to an artifice which was unworthy of so distinguished a man. Rising in the Senate House, he declared to the Five Hundred that Jove and Athene had, in a dream, given him intimation that some great blessing was about to befall the Republic. This obscure announcement appeared to be confirmed by the news, which arrived shortly afterwards, that the Macedonian ruler had been assassinated. No one showed greater joy than Demosthenes. He put off mourning which he had recently assumed for the death of his only daughter, dressed himself in white, crowned his head with a chaplet, and performed a sacrifice at one of the public altars. His satisfaction was carried to the indecent length of moving a decree that the death of Philip should be celebrated by a public thanksgiving, and that religious honours should be paid to the memory of Pausanias. For this exhibition of implacable animosity, even in the presence of death, Phocion severely reproved the orator, and sarcastically told him that he had fine reason to rejoice, when the army which had conquered the Greeks at Chæronea was reduced by only one man. To Demosthenes, however, it seemed that the substitution of Alexander for Philip was a gain to the Hellenic world. Inasmuch as a youth of twenty would now have to act in place of a man of mature years and ripe experience, the opinion was

not unreasonable; but Demosthenes, on his mission to the Macedonian capital in 346 B.C., had formed a very low opinion of the abilities of the boy Alexander—a judgment which says but little for his powers of observation.

Nothing could be more quickly falsified than the views of Demosthenes with respect to Alexander. Again did this consummate orator, but most incapable manager of affairs, lead the country he loved into a false and dangerous position. By inciting the Greeks to a resistance which they were not strong enough to support, he had brought on the fatal disaster of Chæronea. He now resumed his policy of provocation, and, being one of the rulers of the Athenian State, sent envoys to the Greek commonwealths, for the creation of a league against Macedon. Sparta, together with most of the Peloponnesian republics, showed a willingness to act with Athens, and Thebes at once rose against the oligarchical faction which had been established there by Philip under the protection of a Macedonian garrison in the Cadmea. Demosthenes even sought to open a correspondence with Darius III., in the hope of preventing the expedition into Asia; for to him it appeared better that the Asiatic Greeks should remain under the tyranny of Persian satraps than that the European Greeks should still acknowledge the leadership of Macedonia. Unfortunately, he miscalculated the national strength as he had done before, and entirely misapprehended the abilities, energy, and resolution of Alexander, whom he described as a silly youth, easily to be mastered by the Athenians. The young monarch saw that no time was to be lost, and he lost none. The Thessalians were overawed, and at the same time amused with flattering promises. The members of the Amphictyonic Council were called together at Thermopylæ, and Alexander received at their hands the same position of Generalissimo which had been conferred on his father. He then marched on Thebes, where he suppressed the malcontents, and secured the power of the oligarchy. His progress does not seem to have been resisted in the slightest degree. Universal alarm fell upon the Grecian States, and nowhere was this apprehension more deeply felt than at Athens. Preparations for defence were immediately commenced; but at the same time the Assembly adopted a resolution of apology and full submission to Alexander, whom they recognized as the head of Greece, and on whom, in a spirit of slavish adulation, they conferred divine honours. This vote was proposed by a politician named Demades, who was authorised to convey the result to the young prince, then at Thebes. The legation was accompanied by Demosthenes as far as Mount Cithæron, where his courage failed him, and he turned back, although included among the envoys. Such an appointment, however, was certainly unfair in the case of one who had been so strongly identified with an anti-Macedonian policy; and it is not surprising that Demosthenes should have dreaded putting himself in the hands of Alexander, whose forbearance he would naturally distrust.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT.
(From the Bust in the Louvre.)

After receiving the Athenian envoys with great suavity, and accepting their excuses, Alexander convened a general congress at Corinth, which, as before in the time of Philip, was attended by all the Grecian States except Sparta. From the assembled deputies, the young king demanded, as his father had done, the headship of the Greeks collectively, for the purpose of making war with Persia. The representatives of the several States nominated Alexander as Imperator, with full powers by land and sea. Greece was recognized as a confederacy under the direction of the Macedonian sovereign as its executive head and arm—as keeper of the peace within the bounds of Hellas itself, and commander of the united military force in foreign countries. The will of Alexander being supported by a powerful army, the Grecian deputies had no choice but to do what was expected of them; yet it may really have appeared to many that the convention which accompanied the act secured to Greece the benefits of internal peace and unity (which, for want of an effective and complete supremacy, she had previously missed), while it left the local independence of each commonwealth untouched. From this agree-

ment Sparta held aloof, disliking the designs of Alexander, and considering that the headship of Greece belonged to herself, as of old. But she had not the power to assert such pretensions, and Alexander took no notice of her frowardness.

Having settled these matters, the king returned to Macedon; but, before he could set out on his Persian expedition, it was necessary to conduct warlike operations against the Triballi and other Thracian tribes. In the spring of 335 B.C., Alexander traversed Mount Hæmus (now the Eastern Balkans), defeated the Triballi, and pursued them to the Danube. He then crossed the river in some ships which had been sent from Byzantium, after making an ineffectual attack on the fugitives, who had fortified themselves on a small island in the stream. North of the Danube, the Getæ were assailed with such vigour that they speedily took to flight, abandoning their rude and ill-protected town to the conqueror, who laid it in ashes, and, after sacrificial offerings to the gods, regained the southern shore. It has been remarked that Alexander thus effected what had previously been deemed impossible; having crossed the greatest of all known rivers without a bridge, and in the face of an enemy.* Laden with a considerable booty, the king returned towards his own dominions, receiving as he marched the submission of the Danubian tribes, who were admitted to the Macedonian alliance. The Illyrians and Taulantians (whose territories lay to the west) were next subdued, and Alexander then felt that he could give undivided attention to his Persian enterprise, without much fear that, during his absence in Asia, Macedon itself would be invaded by the savage warriors of the north.

But while the king was thus engaged with a succession of not very dignified opponents, a strong antagonistic feeling was again developing itself in Greece. Even before the departure of Alexander for Thrace and the trans-Danubian regions, his officers had given great offence to numerous cities by their exactions and oppressions, and the evil increased with the absence of the king. These arbitrary proceedings seem to have been in direct violation of the convention agreed to between Alexander and the representatives of the Grecian States assembled at Corinth, by virtue of which every Hellenic city was pronounced to be free and autonomous. By the same instrument, provisions were made tending to restrain each political community from attacking the others, or from interfering in their affairs. No despotism was to be established or restored, nor were acts of confiscation or spoliation, the re-division of land or the abolition of debts, to be permitted. To each State was guaranteed freedom of navigation. Maritime capture was prohibited; and the States were forbidden to send armed vessels into each other's harbours, to build vessels there, or to engage seamen in ports not their own. For the enforcement of these rules, a standing army, under Macedonian command, was appointed by Alexander, and it was resolved that the synod of deputies should meet periodically. The convention was described by its royal author as "the public statute of the Greeks," equally binding on all; and he undertook to punish transgressors as rebels. In a very short time, however, the Greeks accused the king himself, and his agents, of violating the agreement in several important respects. They affirmed that the Macedonian troops had tampered with the governments of various cities, in order to confer power on their own partisans; that in some places the popular constitution had been subverted, and citizens had been banished; that, in the Hellespont, the Macedonians had seized all the merchantmen coming with cargoes from the Euxine, and carried them into Tenedos, where they had been detained under false and fraudulent pretences; that in this way Athens and other cities had been deprived of necessary food-supplies; and that a Macedonian trireme had been sent to the Piræus, to ask (in defiance of one of the stipulations in the convention) that smaller vessels might be built there for the king's navy. The detention of the corn-ships was indeed so serious a grievance to the Athenians that they passed a decree for despatching a fleet to rescue the vessels by force; and the Macedonians then gave way.

The complaints of the Greeks may possibly have been exaggerated; yet, considering the usual character of military despotisms, they were doubtless substantially true. It is believed (though the point is not certain) that Demosthenes proposed to the Assembly to declare war against Macedon, and thus violently destroy the league which had been created at Corinth; but the popular representatives saw too clearly the danger of such a course to adopt it. The conduct of Demosthenes at this time is not free from suspicions of a dark and painful character. Æschines, and another orator named Dinarchus, accused him of having taken three hundred talents from Darius, King of Persia, which that monarch had sent to the Athenian people, but which the latter refused to accept. It was added that he appropriated seventy of these talents to his own use: what he did with the

* Grote's History of Greece Part II., chap. 91.

remainder does not appear. We must in fairness recollect that this charge was made by two of the political enemies of Demosthenes—a circumstance which of course lowers the value of the evidence, though it does not necessarily disprove it. The facts are far from clear; but it seems tolerably certain that Demosthenes intrigued with Persia for support against Macedon. Considering that, had such aid been successfully given, it would have resulted in the triumph of an Asiatic despot over a monarch who was to a great extent a Greek, and that in such a case the hereditary oppressor of the Hellenes would assuredly have exacted a heavy price, the wisdom of the Demosthenic policy is far from apparent.

An opportunity for striking a blow at the Macedonian sovereignty occurred to Demosthenes during the absence of Alexander in the north. As no tidings of the king had been heard for a long time, a rumour gained credence that he was dead. Hereupon the Thebans rose, besieged the Macedonian garrison in the Cadmea, and invited other States to declare their independence. When this news was reported to the Athenian Assembly, Phocion and Demades had the penetration to doubt its truth; but Demosthenes and others put faith in the report, and loudly called upon all Greece to rise against the supremacy of Macedon. Demosthenes in particular threw all the energies of his passionate nature into the movement. He persuaded his countrymen to furnish the Thebans with arms and money, and used his influence in other quarters to obtain the utmost support possible for the malcontents. An insurrection took place at Thebes. Amyntas, one of the principal Macedonian officers, and Timolaus, an adherent of Alexander, were put to death, and a general assembly of the citizens was convoked. The popular representatives were asked to declare the independence of Thebes, and they responded by a vote proclaiming the severance of the Republic from the Macedonian rule. The garrison in the Cadmea was called upon to surrender, and it appears to have been thought that success would be achieved by the very boldness of the attempt. But the garrison was strongly posted, and the patriots did not feel themselves sufficiently strong to take the citadel by assault. They accordingly drew a double line of circumvallation round the Cadmea, and then sent envoys to several of the Greek States with piteous appeals for help. The response to these appeals was not generally encouraging. In some quarters, promises were made; in others, sympathy was expressed; but very little actual assistance was given. Demosthenes went as envoy into the Peloponnesus, where, by a liberal expenditure of money, he induced the people to refrain from sending contingents to the Macedonian general, Antipater, at Thebes. But they were content with occupying a purely negative position, and Thebes was left to fight the battle with scarcely any support from the rest of Greece. Phocion and Demades persuaded the Athenians, after a while, to forsake the attitude of defiance which Demosthenes had induced them to assume; and Demosthenes himself, if we are to credit a statement by Æschines—which, however, is open to a reasonable doubt—refused to send money to the Thebans, though assured by them that a bribe would induce the foreign mercenaries forming part of the garrison of the Cadmea to deliver up that fortress.

The result of all these circumstances was that Thebes was utterly crushed. Alexander received news of what was occurring in that city on his return from Illyria, and, marching at once into Bœotia, he arrived at Onchestus before the Thebans had discovered that the report of his decease was false. The extraordinary celerity of his movements, and the fact that he suddenly proved to be alive when people generally had for some time supposed him to be dead, struck consternation into the minds of his opponents, yet at the same time inspired them with a desperate resolve to hazard all upon a hopeless struggle. Having reached the vicinity of Thebes, Alexander drew up his forces on the south side, so as to intercept any reinforcements that might be sent from Athens. Deferring the attack for a day or two, he offered terms which, so far as the mass of the population was concerned, were decidedly liberal, though the leaders of the insurrection were required to be given up. Some were in favour of accepting these offers, but the majority declared for resistance. An engagement speedily ensued, and the Thebans, who had sallied out from the walls, were driven back by the troops under Alexander, who, entering the gates together with their discomfited opponents, found the city in their power. The Macedonian army from without was aided by a sally from the Cadmea, and, although the Thebans fought with heroic tenacity, the conflict soon degenerated into a massacre. A few cavalry and infantry cut their way out into the plain, and escaped; but the slaughter was general and terrific. Not merely the military, who continued to fight single-handed long after their organization was broken up, but old men, women, and children, were struck down without distinction in the streets, in the houses, and even in the

temples. It is recorded that six thousand Thebans were slain, and that thirty thousand were made prisoners. The catastrophe was truly horrible, and among the most relentless of the soldiers under Alexander's command were his Greek auxiliaries, who had an old feeling of animosity against Thebes, and were not unwilling to indulge it.

The unfortunate city being thus entirely subdued, Alexander referred the question of its fate to the Orchomenians, Platæans, Phocians, and other Greek allies; in fact, to the very men who had done their utmost to enhance the carnage. The decision might easily have been anticipated. It was that Thebes should be razed to the ground; that the Cadmea should be maintained as a military post, with a Macedonian garrison; that the Theban territory should be divided among the allies; that all the captive Thebans, with certain specified exceptions, should be sold as slaves; and that every Grecian city should be interdicted from harbouring those who had escaped. This iniquitous sentence was carried out by Alexander, who, however, with that respect for intellectual achievements which was one of the best features of his character, spared the descendants of Pindar, and left the house of the poet standing amid the general ruin. According to Diodorus, the destruction of Thebes was decreed by the general synod of the Grecian States. Arrian, however, asserts that the sentence was that of the Grecian auxiliaries only; and it is to be hoped that this is the more correct account. Alexander afterwards repented of his remorseless policy towards Thebes, and believed that the access of drunken fury during which he killed his friend Clitus was owing to the revenge of the god Dionysus, who was thought to have been born in the Bœotian city thus cruelly destroyed. The conqueror probably hoped to intimidate other Grecian communities by the severity of the treatment which he meted out to the Thebans; and, if so, his anticipations were fully justified by the event. The States which had shown an adverse spirit now made their submission in the utmost haste, and Alexander received their excuses with a suavity which they could hardly have expected. The Athenian Assembly voted that ambassadors should be sent to congratulate Alexander on his recent success; at the same time, acting in a more worthy spirit, they afforded shelter and sympathy to the Theban fugitives. In reply to their address, Alexander wrote a letter demanding the surrender of eight or ten leading Athenians; and at the head of these was Demosthenes.

The great orator not unnaturally claimed the protection of the people, and implored that the demand might be resisted. Phocion, on the other hand, reminded his auditors that here were the very men who had brought Athens into a position of extreme danger, and that they were bound to sacrifice themselves for the general good. He added that, in a similar case, he should be happy to die for the commonwealth; but he advised his countrymen, in the first instance, to make intercession with Alexander. Ultimately, it was resolved that the persons demanded should not be surrendered; but at the same time an embassy was sent to Alexander, deprecating his wrath, and engaging to punish the offenders by judicial sentence, if any crime could be proved against them. The mission was headed by Demades, who is said to have received from Demosthenes a sum of five talents for his promised services. Demades could make no impression on the Macedonian sovereign; but Phocion, who went to Thebes at the head of a second embassy, induced him to rescind his first decree, and to be satisfied with the banishment of Charidemus and Ephialtes, two of the military leaders most opposed to Macedon. Departing from Europe, these men took service under Darius, where they subsequently fought against Alexander in association with the Greek contingent. The influence of Demosthenes at Athens was now completely supplanted by that of Phocion, and Alexander, not knowing the kind of man with whom he had to deal, endeavoured to secure his friendship by the offer of a bribe. The persons who brought the money told him that, in the opinion of their royal master, he was the only just and honest man in Athens. "Suffer me, then," replied Phocion, "to be what I seem, and to retain that character." Phocion was not rich, and he lived after a humble fashion; but the nobility of his soul must have struck the Macedonian envoys with astonishment, if not with veneration.

Alexander soon afterwards returned towards his own capital, but on his way thither visited Delphi, and received the sanction of the oracle to his contemplated expedition against Persia. When, ultimately, he passed beyond the borders of Greece, he quitted that land for evermore, though probably such a circumstance was far from his anticipations. He had by this time sufficiently established his power in Hellas to feel reasonably assured of its allegiance while prosecuting his ambitious schemes in Asia. Events had proved that the Greeks were not able to stand against his armies, and there was abundant reason to believe that large numbers of the people in all the States were well disposed to accept his supremacy. Others, it

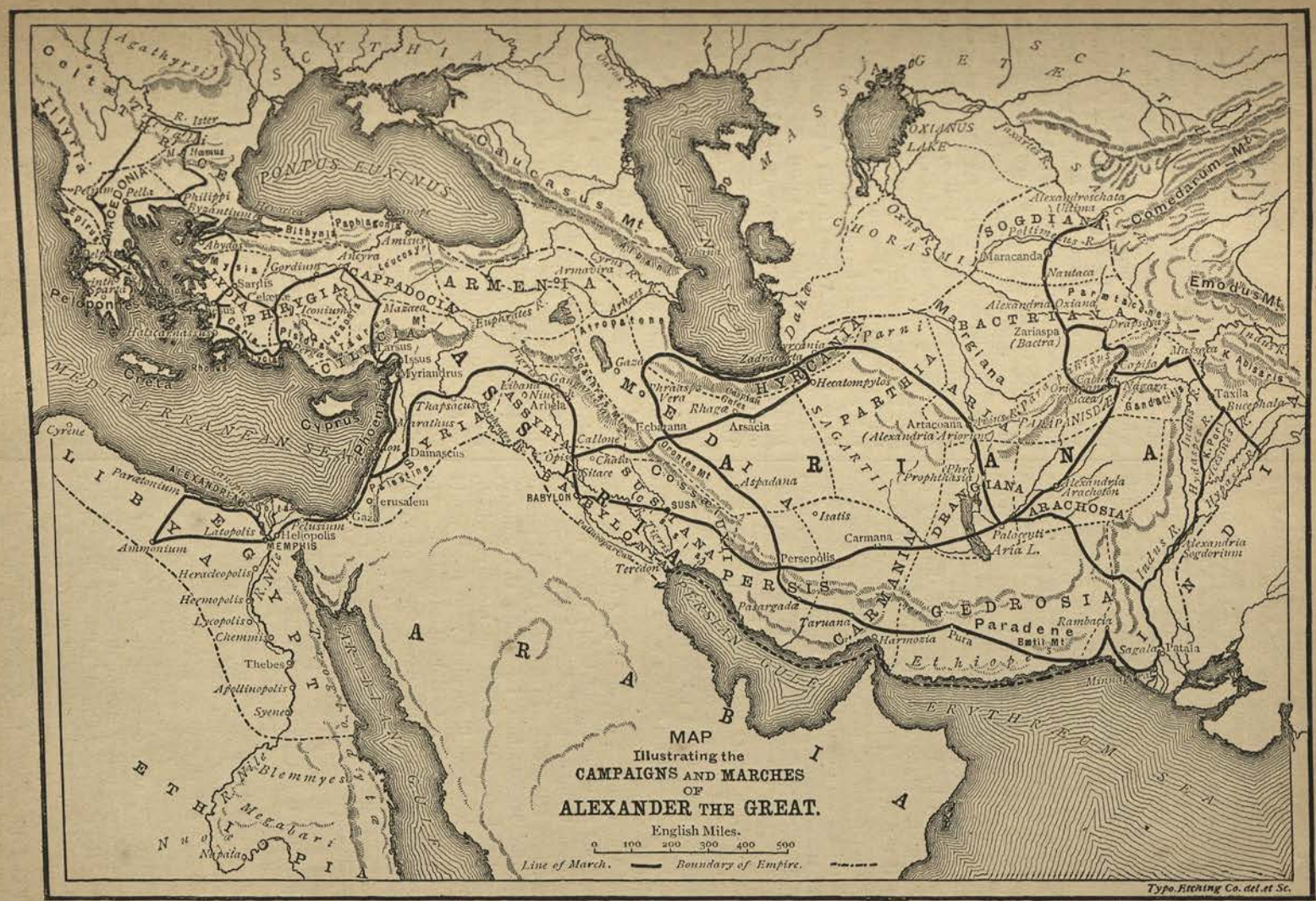
is true, regarded him with the bitterest hatred; but the lessons of experience had taught them that resistance was futile, and that a policy of exasperation and menace, such as Demosthenes had pursued for several years, brought with it nothing but failure and misfortune. Sparta still asserted her independence; but the Spartans had lost the martial virtues of an earlier time, and were powerless to effect the regeneration of Greece. Alexander therefore felt no anxiety in once more returning to Pella, and giving his undivided attention to the collection and organization of his forces for the Persian campaign. The ensuing winter was spent in final preparations, and the invading army was assembled between Pella and Amphipolis early in the spring of 334 B.C. Antipater was appointed regent of Macedon during the absence of the king, and a force of 12,000 foot and 1,500 horse was left at his disposal. The army which Alexander retained for his own purposes was, of course, larger than this; but it was small when one considers the vastness of the enterprise to which it was devoted, and the enormous military resources of the Persian Empire. The core of the expeditionary army was the celebrated Macedonian phalanx, and the total number of the infantry, apart from those who were not actually Macedonians, was about 12,000. The phalanx was supported by another body called the Hypaspists, or Shield-bearers, who had originally formed the body-guard of the king. These warriors were chiefly employed in rapid night-marches, in the assault of fortified places, and in other operations for which the elaborate and massive organization of the phalanx was unfitted. The light-armed troops, who included javelin-men, archers, and slingers, were for the most part foreigners, though mingled with a certain number of Macedonians. Their office was to skirmish in the front and flank of the heavy infantry, or to pursue the enemy when in flight. The Macedonian cavalry had always been famous, and Alexander reckoned much on its rapid and brilliant movements. The horsemen were divided into heavy and light cavalry, of whom the former were armed with short pikes, and the latter with long spears. To the heavy cavalry was given the honourable title of Companions, because they generally accompanied Alexander himself at the head of the whole battle-array. The person of the king was immediately surrounded by a number of youths, sons of the Macedonian nobles, from whom was chosen a still more select corps of body-guards. The army was strengthened by an effective siege-train, the formation of which had been commenced by Philip, and which comprised the best engines for battering walls and projecting missiles that the world was then capable of producing. The composition of the army, so far as nationality was concerned, presented several varieties; but the Greek element was not very strong. More Greek auxiliaries were ranged on the side of Persia than on that of Macedon; for, although Greece had for the most part accepted the rule of Alexander, the enthusiasm for a Persian expedition was by no means general.

The expedition set forth in April, 334 B.C., when Alexander was two-and-twenty years of age. Before leaving Pella, he distributed most of the Crown property among his friends, and, when asked what he had reserved for himself, replied, "My hopes." Marching from Pella through Amphipolis, he passed along the coast of Thrace, and so down the Chersonese. Sixteen days after starting, he reached Sestos, where the fleet (which included twenty triremes furnished by Athens) awaited him. The period is among the most interesting in the history of the ancient world, because of the results which followed. The great expedition of Xerxes was about to be reversed. On that earlier occasion, the enormous numerical forces of an Asiatic despotism were poured upon the shores of Europe, with every accompaniment of barbaric splendour which boundless ostentation could prompt, and boundless wealth supply. Had the Persian inroad been successful, the great ideas of Grecian polity and culture—ideas essentially European, and immeasurably superior to the ferocious despotisms of the East—might have been destroyed in their adolescence, beyond all hope of renovation in that part of the world. The invasion of Persia by Alexander was the returning wave of Greek civilization, breaking upon the enormous, but decaying, bulk of Persian sovereignty. The force thus directed by the Macedonian monarch was singularly small for such an enterprise. It had neither the multitudinous vastness nor the external pomp which distinguished the hosts of Xerxes; but it was handled by consummate genius, and regulated by a scientific organization which had been advancing to perfection during many years. The expedition from Asia into Europe was the operation of matter upon mind; and it failed. The expedition from Europe into Asia was a manifestation of intellectual force, fresh, concentrated, and active, against the dull mass of Oriental immobility and tradition. It succeeded, because active forces are necessarily more potent than passive; because the Persian Empire had reached the stage of decrepitude; because the power of Macedon was youthful, energetic, and self-confident; and because

the time had arrived when a new order of things was to be prepared in the most important regions of the globe. However much we may dislike the character or the personal aims of Alexander, we may say that, in a certain sense, he was a providential agent for effecting much which the world was the better for obtaining. His armies, and the kingdoms which arose out of his transitory empire, spread Greek civilization, Greek thought, and the resources of the Greek tongue, over the whole of Western Asia; and the subsequent history of the Western world has been widely and deeply influenced by the campaigns of Alexander. It is amazing that a man of the intellectual power of Demosthenes should not have seen that, as the day of republican Greece, with all its virtues and all its faults, had manifestly passed, it was better that a Hellenised Macedon should prevail over Persia, than that the designs of Alexander should be thwarted by an alliance between the commonwealths of Greece and the unprogressive despotism of Susa.

The army was conducted across the straits by Parmenio, while for the present Alexander visited Elæus, at the extremity of the Thracian Chersonese, in order that he might pay his devotions at the shrine of Protesilaüs, one of the heroes of the "Iliad." He then crossed over in the admiral's ship, which he steered with his own hand. Again he took care to identify himself as much as possible with the heroes of the national Epic, being resolved to land at that point near the mouth of the Hellespont where the Achæans were supposed to have disembarked in the expedition to Troy. In the middle of the passage he sacrificed a bull, with libations from a golden goblet, to Poseidon and the Nereids, and, when close to the shore, hurled his spear from the ship to the land, as an intimation that he took possession of Asia. Clad in full armour, he then leaped upon the beach, and, still following up his beloved associations with the mythical age of Greek heroism—to him, doubtless, as real as anything by which he was surrounded—ascended the hill on which Ilium had stood, and sacrificed to the patron goddess, Athene. In the temple of that deity he deposited his own suit of armour, and took in exchange some panoply which enjoyed the credit of having been worn by Greek chieftains of the Trojan war. Conceiving that he might become the victim of supernatural wrath because of his descent from Neoptolemus, by whom Priam had been slain, he made expiatory offerings to the manes of the ancient king. Next he crowned with a garland the tomb and monumental column of Achilles, and, having anointed himself with oil, ran naked round the memorial structures. Finally, he erected altars to Jove, Hercules, and Athene, on the opposing points of Europe and Asia from which his army had started, and where it effected its landing.

These ceremonies having been performed, Alexander rejoined the army at Arisbe, near Abydos, and then marched eastwards along the coast of the Propontis. The army which he commanded was not only small in numbers, but, so far as money was concerned, very poorly provided against the exigencies of a great campaign. According to one authority, Alexander took with him no more than was sufficient for maintaining his men thirty days. As it was, he had incurred a considerable debt in equipping his forces, so that, had the project failed, the ruin of his power would doubtless have followed. But the ardour of his temperament was such that he probably reckoned on success as a certainty, and the event showed that his calculations were something more than the wild dreams of a fiery and unregulated ambition. Whatever befell, he knew he could depend upon his soldiers. His principal officers were native Macedonians, most of whom had been trained to war under Philip. A few Greeks occupied important posts; but these were rather the exceptions, and they were regarded with some jealousy by the commanders of Macedonian birth. On the whole, the army of Alexander was a most efficient instrument of attack, and the power of resistance in Persia was less than might fairly have been supposed. The Persian king and his satraps appear to have committed the grievous fault of underrating their adversaries. Although the naval force of Persia was much greater than that of Macedon, no attempt had been made to oppose the passage of the Hellespont, though Memnon the Rhodian had strongly advised that the straits should be disputed. The commanders generally seem to have been of opinion that they could crush the European force shortly after it had landed. A large army had been concentrated at Zelea, near the Propontis, under the command of Arsites, the satrap of Phrygia. The strength of this army was not less than 40,000 men, and may possibly have been much more; but it proved quite unequal to checking the invasion. A considerable portion of the infantry consisted of Greek mercenaries under the command of Memnon, who, together with his brother-in-law, Artabazus, had been obliged some years previously to leave Persia, owing to an unsuccessful revolt against the king, and who had been hospitably received by Philip of Macedon. Memnon was now pardoned and recalled, and it was probably hoped that the


MAP
Illustrating the
CAMPAIGNS AND MARCHES
OF
ALEXANDER THE GREAT.
English Miles.
0 100 200 300 400 500
Line of March.
Boundary of Empire.
Typo. Etching Co. del. et Sc.
PONTUS EUXINUS
Caucasus Mt
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
ERYTHRAEUM MARE
PERSIS
MEDIA
BABYLONIA
ASSYRIA
SUSIANA
ARMENIA
CAPPADOCIA
PARTHIA
HYRCANIA
MARGIANA
BACTRIANA
SOGDIANA
DRANGIANA
ARACHOSIA
GEDROSIA
CARMANIA
ARABIA
AEGYPTUS
LIBYA
ETHIOPIA
SCYTHIA
Comedarum Mt
Emodus Mt
Indus R
Nile R
Euphrates R
Tigris R
Oxus R
Jaxartes R
Persepolis
Susa
Babylon
Memphis
Alexandria
Ecbatana
Hecatompylos
Zariaspa (Bactra)
Maracanda
Taxila
Bucephala
Arbela
Gaugamela
Issus
Tarsus
Damascus
Jerusalem
Gaza
Pelusium
Heliopolis
Thebes
Syene
Meroe
Nubia
Abyssinia
Arsacia
Artacoana
Carmana
Pura
Harmozia
Paradene
Patala
Sagala
Alexandria Arachotum
Alexandria Oxiana
Alexandria Eschata
Alexandria Segdorium
Aria L.
Palacentia
Prophthasia
Phrada
Taruana
Pasargadæ
Aspadana
Rhagæ
Thapsacus
Marathus
Sitacæ
Callone
Opis
Orontes R
Araxes R
Cyrus R
Araxes R
Oxus R
Jaxartes R
Indus R
Hydaspes R
Acesines R
Hydraotes R
Zadracarta
Gaza
Arsacia
Parthyene
Apollinopolis
Chemmis
Lycopolis
Heracleopolis
Hermopolis
Ammonium
Paraetonium
Cyrene
Crete
Rhodes
Cyprus
Phoenicia
Palestine
Coelesyria
Mesopotamia
Babylonia
Susiana
Persis
Carmania
Gedrosia
Arabia
Aegyptus
Libya
Ethiopia
Scythia
Sarmatia
Asia
Europa
Illyria
Thrace
Macedonia
Pelion
Pella
Philippi
Byzantium
Bithynia
Paphlagonia
Amisus
Amasia
Gordium
Sardis
Celaenæ
Iconium
Mazaca
Tarsus
Issus
Myriandrus
Arbela
Gaugamela
Nineveh
Ecbatana
Hecatompylos
Zariaspa (Bactra)
Maracanda
Nautaca
Taxila
Bucephala
Sagala
Patala
Pura
Harmozia
Paradene
Rambacia
Batis Mt
Carmana
Persepolis
Susa
Babylon
Memphis
Alexandria
Pelusium
Heliopolis
Thebes
Syene
Meroe
Nubia
Abyssinia
Arsacia
Artacoana
Ecbatana
Hecatompylos
Zariaspa (Bactra)
Maracanda
Taxila
Bucephala
Sagala
Patala
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Harmozia
Paradene
Rambacia
Batis Mt
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Persepolis
Susa
Babylon
Memphis
Alexandria
Pelusium
Heliopolis
Thebes
Syene
Meroe
Nubia
Abyssinia

experience he had gained in Macedon would be found useful in encountering the advance of Alexander. But everything was compromised by the imbecility of the monarch.

Although Persia was no longer so predominant a power as she had been in the days of Xerxes, the prosperity of the empire had been to a considerable extent restored under the vigorous rule of Artaxerxes Ochus, who was poisoned by the eunuch Bagoas, in 338 B.C. Phœnicia and Egypt had been once more annexed to the Persian monarchy; but the apparent recovery of the empire was lost soon after the decease of Ochus. Darius III. was a man whose intellectual capacity was far from equal to the extraordinary difficulties in which he was soon to be involved. On the assassination of Philip by Pausanias, he had the folly to boast (whether truly or falsely) that he had instigated the deed; and he had also spoken in contemptuous terms of the young king, Alexander. These things were doubtless within the knowledge of the Macedonian sovereign, and they must have strengthened his determination to carry out the designs against Persia which his father had conceived. Darius would have done well to prepare for the worst; but he let the proper season slip by, and was to some extent taken by surprise, before the full resources of his empire were in a condition for immediate use.

Had Memnon been permitted to follow his own conceptions of what was advisable under the circumstances, he might have stopped the advance of Alexander. His advice was that they should retreat before the Macedonians, lay waste the country, and even destroy the towns—a measure which, as the invaders were ill-supplied with food, would have placed them at a terrible disadvantage. He also recommended that the naval forces of Persia should be employed in harassing the coasts of Greece and Macedon. The other generals, however, rejected these plans, and the Persian army awaited attack at Zelea. Between the ground occupied by the Asiatics, and that by which the Macedonians were advancing, lay the river Granicus, and Parmenio, who, as a veteran, was inclined to caution, counselled Alexander to delay the attack till the next morning. The king, however, refused to be influenced by any such considerations, and, declaring that he would not be stopped by a paltry stream, directed his cavalry to cross the river, and himself followed at the head of the phalanx. The passage of the Granicus was no easy matter, for the water in parts was very deep, and the opposite bank was abrupt and rugged. In the battle which ensued, and which was fought on the 22nd of May, 334 B.C., Alexander entered so closely into the very thickest of the fray that his life was in great danger, and he was at one time saved by the heroism of Clitus. The most determined resistance to the Macedonians was that of the Greek mercenaries in the Persian service, who, being outnumbered by the phalanx, were slain where they stood, with the exception of 2,000 who were taken prisoners. The victory was complete, and it had been purchased by Alexander at a very small expenditure of life. After the battle, the Macedonian conqueror paid funeral honours, not only to the slain on his own side, but to those also on the side of the Persians. The Greek prisoners, however, being regarded as traitors to the common cause of Hellas, were despatched to Macedonia, to work in chains. Alexander never lost an opportunity of asserting himself as the true representative of Grecian nationality. It was in this capacity that he sent three hundred panoplies to be dedicated to Athene in the Acropolis of Athens, with the inscription, "From Alexander, son of Philip, and the Greeks (except the Lacedæmonians), out of the spoil of the foreigners inhabiting Asia." The parents and children of those who had fallen in the battle were granted immunity from all taxation, and from personal service in the armies; while twenty-five of the king's body-guard, who died heroically about the royal person, were honoured with bronze statues by Lysippus, at Dium, near the Macedonian frontier.

The effect of their defeat on the Granicus was so discouraging to the Persians that the whole satrapy of Phrygia at once submitted to Alexander, who now marched in a southerly direction to Sardis, which surrendered at his approach, although the strength of the citadel was such that it might have defied attack. The capitulation of Ephesus rapidly followed. Magnesia and Tralles next succumbed to the youthful conqueror, and Miletus was presently invested. Memnon had by this time been appointed by Darius to the chief conduct of the war, and his approach to Miletus, with a fleet of four hundred Cyprian and Phœnician vessels, induced the Persian commander in that maritime city to attempt a defence which he had before regarded as hopeless. But the Macedonian navy had previously barred the mouth of the harbour, and Alexander, after effecting a breach in the walls by his powerful engines, stormed the city with great slaughter. Memnon then retired with his fleet to Halicarnassus, where, in combination with Ephialtes, the Athenian exile, he conducted a desperate defence. The old dynasty of Carian princes, founded at Halicarnassus soon after the

Persian conquest of Asia Minor, had been succeeded, about 380 B.C., by a younger dynasty, which at the period of Alexander's attack was divided into two factions. Pixodarus, a son of the celebrated Mausolus and Artemisia, reigned at Halicarnassus, while his sister Ada ruled over the rest of Caria, with Alinda for her capital. Pixodarus was the ally of Persia; Ada, on the other hand, supported the cause of Alexander, adopted him as a son, and consigned her kingdom into his hands. Ephialtes, who defended Halicarnassus from within, while Memnon operated from his head-quarters in the island of Cos, was one of the two generals who had been banished from Athens on the demand of Alexander when he consented to spare the lives of Demosthenes and the other antagonistic orators. He had every reason for defending the city to the utmost, and he acted with signal valour and determination. Two desperate sallies were made by the garrison, in the second of which Ephialtes was killed. Memnon then perceived that further resistance was useless, and, withdrawing the garrison and stores, together with a large number of the inhabitants, he set fire to the city, and, under cover of night, crossed over to Cos a little before the approach of winter. Alexander immediately entered the flaming town, and, though not without much difficulty, extinguished the conflagration. The whole of Caria was restored to Ada as a tributary principality, and Ptolemy, the son of Lagus, was left at Halicarnassus with 3,000 men, to blockade the two citadels which the enemy still retained. In other places subdued by him, Alexander established democratical forms of government, as if to show that he was really the liberator, and not the oppressor, of Grecian communities.

Having sent a portion of his army, under Parmenio, into winter-quarters at Sardis, the king himself, at the head of a picked body of troops, proceeded south-east along the coast of Lycia in the early months of 333 B.C. With the exception of Marmareïs, which made an obstinate defence, the Lycian towns tendered their submission without the slightest attempt at resistance; and from the city of Phaselis the conqueror received a golden crown. Approaching the borders of Pamphylia, he found that the narrow passage lying between Mount Climax and the sea was flooded by the waves. He accordingly detached the main body of his troops, whom he sent by a circuitous route across the Taurus range to Perga, while he himself, with a chosen band, waded breast-high through the water for nearly a whole day. After rejoining the remainder of his troops at Perga, he reduced the towns of Aspendus and Sidé; then turning northward, and crossing the wild mountains of Pisidia, where he had to fight his way through a number of barbarous tribes, he reached the neighbourhood of Gordium, in Phrygia, where he was rejoined by Parmenio at the head of fresh levies which had been recruited in the Peloponnesus during the previous winter. It was now the spring of 333 B.C., and, with his augmented forces, and the whole summer before him, Alexander felt confident of still greater successes. Gordium, which is situated on the river Sangarius, had been the capital of the ancient kings of Phrygia, and a curious legend existed in connection with Gordius, and his son Midas, who had founded the dynasty. According to the story, they were originally peasants, and, having been appointed by an oracle to the royal dignity, they had ridden into the capital city on a rude country waggon, which in the time of Alexander was still preserved with great veneration in the citadel of Gordium. An ancient prophecy promised the sovereignty of Asia to him who should unfasten the knotted cordage by which the yoke of the waggon was fastened to the pole. Some accounts state that Alexander overcame the difficulty by drawing out a peg; others say that he cut through the entanglement with his sword. At any rate, "the Gordian knot" was loosed after some fashion, and the people were satisfied that the prophecy had been fulfilled. Alexander then pursued his march eastwards to Ancyra, where he received the submission of the Paphlagonians. From the moment of his landing on the shores of Asia, his progress had been one continued triumph; but his rear was now threatened with a danger of a serious character. The Persian fleet under the command of Memnon had entered the Ægean, seized Chios and the greater part of Lesbos, and laid siege to Mitylene. Here the enterprising Rhodian died, but Mitylene was shortly afterwards taken by Pharnabazus. Affairs looked threatening in various parts of Greece. Several of the small islands forming the Cyclades gave in their adhesion to the Persians. Eubœa was ripe for revolt, and the Spartans began to entertain hopes that the Macedonian predominance would shortly be destroyed. But the movement languished after the death of Memnon, and Alexander was soon delivered from any anxiety as to the allegiance of Greece.

After quitting Ancyra, the Macedonian hero advanced through Cappadocia, forced his way southwards over the passes of Mount Taurus, and descended into the plains of Cilicia. In the meanwhile, Darius perceiving that the safety of

his empire was seriously menaced, collected an immense army in the vicinity of Babylon, and, resigning the more western parts of his dominions as incapable of defence, resolved to stake all upon his personal operations in the field. Amongst his troops were twenty or thirty thousand Greek mercenaries, and one of his officers was the Athenian general, Charidemus, who had been banished with Ephialtes, and on whose judgment he placed great reliance. Nevertheless, he was much incensed at some remarks of this commander, who depreciated the quality of the Asiatic troops, and exhorted the king to raise a larger body of Greeks. The slavish courtiers of Darius persuaded him that the advice was nothing short of treason, and he gave up Charidemus to the executioners. As the Athenian was being led away, he exclaimed, "My avenger will soon be upon you;" and so in truth it proved. The high-road from Cappadocia into Cilicia might have been easily defended against the advance of Alexander, as it consisted of a narrow pass over the mountain-range of Taurus; but the Macedonians encountered no opposition whatever, and entered the city of Tarsus without striking a blow. A violent fever at this place nearly brought the life of Alexander to an end. While heated with the long and arduous march, he plunged into the intensely cold waters of the river Cydnus, fed by the perpetual snows of Taurus. The king's physicians, with one exception, were so overcome with fear of the possible consequences that they could prescribe nothing. An Acarnanian named Philip, however, advised a certain potion. Alexander had just before received a letter from Parmenio, imputing to Philip a design to poison the king in the interests of Darius. He thrust the letter under his pillow, and, without saying a word as to its contents, took the draught from the hands of Philip, swallowed it, and then delivered Parmenio's communication to the physician, closely watching his countenance as he read it. His scrutiny entirely satisfied him of Philip's innocence, and shortly afterwards he had sufficiently recovered to resume the personal superintendence of his army. Nevertheless, a delay at Tarsus was considered advisable for his complete restoration.

On the resumption of the campaign, Alexander marched in person against the Cilician towns, while he sent Parmenio to seize the Gates of Cilicia and Syria—a pass on the eastern side of the Gulf of Issus, leading from the one country into the other. Here also a resolute stand might have been made; but the resistance actually encountered was extremely slight. Darius had by this time taken up a position at Sochi, in Syria, where in the autumn he occupied an immense plain, admirably fitted for the operations of his numerous cavalry. The forces of Alexander were greatly inferior; but his soldiers were filled with confidence, and he himself was not the man to shrink from any contest which offered the slightest probabilities of success. He accordingly moved eastwards through the pass of the Amanian Gate, turned southwards along the eastern shore of the Gulf of Issus, and so arrived at Myriandrus, a town to the north-west of Antioch, not far from Sochi, where the forces of Darius were assembled. In the boastful spirit common to Oriental monarchs, the Persian king had made preparations for a triumph. He was accompanied by a splendid retinue, including his mother, his wife, and his children. An enormous baggage-train followed the march of his army, and his necessities were served by six hundred mules and three hundred camels, laden with gold and silver. Doubtless he looked forward to an easy success over the adventurous Macedonian who had come so far to attack him. But he little understood the genius of his enemy, or the concentrated vigour of European troops; and he was destined to a stern awakening, which brought his empire to the very brink of ruin, and ensured the ultimate failure both of himself and of his house.

ALEXANDER ENTERING BABYLON.

CHAPTER XLV.

ALEXANDER IN WESTERN ASIA.

Removal of Darius from Sochi to the Rear of Alexander's Position—Counter-march of Alexander to the Banks of the Pinarus—Battle of Issus—Defeat of the Persians, and Flight of Darius—Effects of the Macedonian Victory in Asia and Europe—Entry of Alexander into Phœnicia—Siege of Tyre—Construction of a Causeway by Alexander—Collection of a Naval Force—Desperate Defence of Tyre, and Capture of the City—Second Offer of Alliance from Darius—Siege of Gaza by Alexander—Cruel Treatment of the Vanquished—Jewish Tradition of the Visit of Alexander to Jerusalem—Willing Submission of Egypt to the Conqueror—Foundation of Alexandria—Visit of Alexander to the Temple of Jupiter Ammon—Return to Western Asia—Pursuit of Darius—Position of the Persian Monarch on the Eastern Bank of the Tigris—Fears of the Macedonians—Advance of Alexander towards the Enemy—Battle of Arbela, and Defeat of the Persian Army—Disastrous Flight and Pursuit—Naval Successes of the Macedonians in the Ægean—Entry of Alexander into Babylon—Appointment of Satraps—Chastisement of the Uxii—Passage of the Persian Gates—Alexander at Persepolis—Destruction of the City, after the Removal of its Treasures—Pursuit of Darius through Media into Parthia—Betrayal and Death of the Persian Monarch.

BEFORE reaching Myriandrus, Alexander had rejoined the detachment under Parmenio, sent forward in advance of the main body. He had now penetrated far into the Persian Empire; he was a long way from his base of operations; and to an ordinary observer it must have appeared that his position was one of extreme peril. Such was the view of Darius. The Persian sovereign had purposely left the passes open, that the invader might be lured into a trap whence he would find it impossible to escape. Alexander, on the other hand, accepted the risk, feeling confident of his ability to turn all to good account; and his anticipations were fully realised. Preparations, however, were made for cutting off his retreat. The Greek advisers of Darius were in favour of his remaining in the plain of Sochi, and there awaiting attack; but, although this seems to have been his original intention, he at length grew tired of the delay, and resolved to seek his adversary where he could discover him, having first barred the road behind. Between Sochi and Myriandrus lay the southern branch of the Amanus mountain-range. This was crossed by Darius over the more northern of two passes leading towards the Gulf of Issus—a route which conducted him into the narrow plain north of the Cilician and Syrian Gates, which Alexander had passed through on his way to Myriandrus. Seizing on the town of Issus, the Persians massacred or mutilated the Macedonian sick and wounded who were lying there, and then marched southwards—that is, in the direction of Myriandrus—as far as the river Pinarus, on the banks of which they encamped. The invaders were consequently threatened in their rear, and, had they been beaten, would have found their retreat effectually cut off.

Intelligence of the Persian movement was brought to Alexander by some fugitives from Issus. The Macedonian king had been detained at Myriandrus by a terrific storm, and was thus compelled to arrest his march, which was to have conducted him through the farther pass of Mount Amanus (the southern Gates of Syria), and so, by a circuitous route, to have brought him round to the enemy's position at Sochi. It was at Myriandrus, therefore, that he heard from the fugitives of the change in his opponent's plans. At first, he could not credit the report; but, having sent some of his officers along the coast of the Gulf in a small galley, they brought back word that a vast array

of Persian troops was to be seen on the shore. An alteration of the campaign was accordingly imperative, and Alexander, facing round, retraced his steps towards the north, in order that he might reopen his communications. By a hurried night-march, he once more reached the Gates of Cilicia and Syria, which, coming from the opposite direction, he had traversed two days before. There the troops rested for the remainder of the night, and at daybreak the march was resumed. On approaching the river Pinarus, Alexander formed his line of battle. The position was more favourable to him than to the Persians; for, as the plain was not above a mile and a half in breadth, the latter could not take advantage of their immense superiority in numbers, while the Macedonians could make the most of their comparatively small forces. To the right of Alexander lay the rugged declivities of Mount Amanus; to his left was the Gulf of Issus; across the road flowed the Pinarus from east to west. The main body of the Persian army was posted behind this small stream, on the right or northern bank; but Darius, hearing that Alexander was marching towards him, threw across the river a detachment of 30,000 cavalry and 20,000 infantry, to protect the bulk of the forces while he made his dispositions. After awhile, these troops were recalled, and an enormous mass of fighting-men — apparently amounting to 160,000 — was wedged between the mountains and the sea. Owing to the narrowness of the plain, the greater number of the troops were wholly inoperative, being stationed far in the rear, where they were incapable of striking a blow. The best of Darius's soldiers were 30,000 Greek mercenaries, who were placed in the centre of the Persian line, with 30,000 Asiatics on each flank. All were heavy-armed troops, and behind this rampart of warriors Darius himself sat in a magnificent chariot, surrounded by the body-guard of the Immortals, and by several of his chief courtiers.

When the withdrawal of the 50,000 Persians from the south side of the Pinarus enabled Alexander to see the line of battle of the enemy, he made some alterations in his own, extending his front so as to equal that of the Persians, and strengthening his right wing, in order that he might be secure against any attempt to outflank him from the mountains. Some such attempt was indeed made a little before the commencement of the general action, when a body of 20,000 Persians, posted on the slopes, threatened the right of the Macedonian line. This movement, however, was so easily repelled that, for the remainder of the contest, Alexander considered it sufficient to guard his flank with a small detachment of three hundred heavy cavalry. The right wing of the Macedonians was commanded by Alexander himself, who placed the left under the directions of Parmenio, with strict injunctions to keep near the sea, lest his line should be turned. The Pinarus flows for the most part through steep banks, and, where these were wanting, Darius threw up entrenchments, to obstruct the advance of the Macedonians. Alexander, however, was not to be deterred by such difficulties, and, finding that the enemy was disinclined to cross the river, resolved to do so himself. He moved forward slowly until he had arrived within bow-shot of the opposing line, when, with accelerated pace, his legions crossed the river, and precipitated themselves on the Persians. The first shock of the encounter was between the right wing of the Macedonians and the left wing of their antagonists. The latter gave way with precipitation, thus exposing the person of the king, who, struck with panic, turned his chariot round, and galloped from the field. According to the account given by Diodorus Siculus, and also by other ancient historians, a prolonged and desperate combat took place round the chariot of Darius, in the course of which the Persian monarch wounded Alexander in the thigh. No such circumstance, however, is mentioned in other narratives, and the fact is therefore doubtful. A damaged mosaic at Pompeii—perhaps copied from an older picture—represents Alexander himself charging down upon the chariot of Darius; but the Persian king, so far from wounding his opponent, seems to be frantically addressing his body-guard, while the charioteer is lashing the horses, that they may break away from the entanglement of vehicles and combatants.

Whatever the amount of resistance offered by Darius in person, it is certain that he ultimately took to flight. So great, indeed, was his terror that, on reaching some deep ravines where a chariot could not pass, he got on horseback, and threw away his shield, his bow, and his royal mantle. The soldiers of the left wing, seeing their king and commander thus ignominiously rushing from the fray, and having no one else from whom to receive directions, abandoned all further effort, fell into disorder, and trampled one another in their wild struggles to escape. The battle, however, was prolonged with considerable spirit by the centre and right of the Persian line. The Greek mercenaries forming the centre fought with remarkable valour and determination, and for a time checked the progress of the Macedonians, who lost heavily in the encounter. The latter might even have been defeated, had not Alexander,

after completing the rout of the Persian left, gone to their assistance. The Greeks were now attacked in flank as well as in front, and their discomfiture was soon effected. Hearing of the flight of Darius, they considered that the day was lost, and, making no attempt to retrieve their fortunes, withdrew from the field in good order. The cavalry on the right of the Persian line fought extremely well, and are even said to have crossed the Pinarus, and engaged the Thessalians. But here again the flight of Darius and of the left wing was productive of disastrous effects, and the cavalry fled on

THE BATTLE OF ISSUS. (*From the Mosaic at Pompeii.*)

learning what had happened in the other direction. When the whole of the Persian line was worsted, Alexander set out in pursuit. Thousands of the fugitives were killed, either by the Macedonians, or by their own struggles to obtain precedence in the narrow passes of the mountains: some of the ravines were choked with the dead bodies of the slain. The total loss was enormous, while that of the conquerors was but slight.

This celebrated and important battle, which left little doubt as to the ultimate fate of the Persian Empire, was fought in November, 333 B.C. It would hardly have been surprising had Alexander lost all power of self-control after so grand a success; but he behaved towards the Persian princesses left behind in the camp with exemplary generosity and consideration. Returning at night from the pursuit, he entered the tent of Darius. On every side were evidences of Oriental luxury. Here, a bath steamed with the choicest odours; there, a table was spread for the royal banquet. But from an inner compartment came the wailing of women; for it was supposed, both by Sisygambis, the mother of the king, and by his wife Statira, that Darius was dead. Alexander, however, informed them of his safety, and treated his captives with a respectful deference not usually exhibited by conquerors in the ancient world. To Sisygambis he gave assurances that his expedition against her son was undertaken out of no feeling of personal enmity to him, but as a fair contest for the empire of Asia—a representation which entirely excluded the only justification for the war, the liberation of the Greek colonies oppressed by the Persian kings.

Darius, after making his way across the Amanus range, escaped to Thapsacus, together with 4,000 fugitives, whom he had managed to concentrate once more under his flag. Shortly afterwards, he recrossed the Euphrates, and began to gather fresh troops about him for a renewed campaign. The greater number of the levies which fought at Issus seem to have dissolved, and it is recorded that 8,000 of the Greek mercenaries fought their way out of Cilicia by the southern extremity of that province, and, marching to Tripolis, on the coast of Phœnicia, embarked there for Cyprus, and ultimately for Egypt. For a time, the war languished, and Darius sent a letter to his Macedonian rival

(then at Marathus, in Phœnicia), proposing to become his friend and ally. Alexander, however, replied that he must in future be addressed in the language, not of an equal, but of a subject; that if Darius intended to contest with him the lordship of Asia, he must stand and fight for it, and not run away. He could well afford to assume the tone of a dictator, for the victory of Issus had placed him in a position of indisputable superiority. Signs of readiness to revolt had been for some time noticeable in Greece; but these entirely disappeared after the crushing blow which fell on Darius. Demosthenes, who had been showing letters to his friends, on the faith of which he exultingly announced that Alexander was entangled in Cilicia, was once more reduced to despondency. The Spartan monarch Agis, who had been intriguing with the Persian fleet in the Ægean, in the hope of inducing Pharnabazus to land a force in the Peloponnesus, was compelled to abandon the attempt; and the other States of Greece, assembled at Corinth, sent a golden crown to Alexander, while Pharnabazus hastened back to Asia, fearing that Chios would revolt. Nevertheless, it was believed by Alexander that the Persian fleet might even yet prove troublesome; and, in order to cut off the sources of the maritime power still wielded by his adversary, he resolved to seize Phœnicia and Egypt.

Detaching Parmenio to seize Damascus, where a vast treasure was stored, Alexander moved southwards in the latter part of 333 B.C., entered Phœnicia, and appeared before the town of Marathus, which at once submitted to him. Sidon and several of the other cities adopted the same course, but Tyre, while disposed to be compliant in many respects, still retained a sense of independence. On Alexander informing a complimentary deputation from that city, early in 332 B.C., that he would visit the place, and sacrifice to Melcarth, a Tyrian deity supposed to be identical with Hercules, he was told in reply that foreigners could not be admitted within the walls, but that a more ancient shrine dedicated to this god would be found at Old Tyre, on the mainland. Incensed at the refusal, Alexander determined to besiege the newer city, which had for many centuries been the seat of government. The town was situated on an island about half a mile distant from the coast. The steep and rocky shores of the island were crowned with massive walls, which rose to a height of a hundred and fifty feet. In the two harbours of Tyre were numerous vessels of war, of the best description then known to the world; and the city was well provided with victuals and water. The difficulties of attack were therefore extreme, and the Tyrians may have been excused if they thought the position impregnable. A commander less enterprising and confident than its then assailant might have been daunted by the fact that he had no vessels in which to cross the narrow channel between the continent and the island. But Alexander overcame the obstacle by constructing a causeway from shore to shore, fetching his materials from the forests of Lebanon and the ruins of Old Tyre. The work was necessarily one of great labour and trouble, and, as the mole was driven farther and farther into the sea, interruptions caused by the Tyrian vessels, and by the violence of the waves, were frequent and serious. To protect themselves against these annoyances, the Macedonians planted two wooden towers, covered with hides, in front of the advancing work, and discharged showers of stones upon the enemy's boats. In this way the mole was driven forward until it had nearly reached the city walls, when a fireship, laden with combustibles, was despatched against it. Aided by a strong wind, this engine set fire to the two protecting towers; and, at the same time, ships were sent out to land men on various parts of the causeway, which was so gravely damaged as to be almost destroyed.

Alexander now resolved to make the mole of greater breadth and solidity, and to protect it with more towers. He perceived, however, that he was not likely to prevail against Tyre without the assistance of a fleet; and he therefore left the prosecution of the siege in the hands of Perdiccas and Craterus, while he himself departed for Sidon, for the purpose of getting together as many ships as he could collect. For the attainment of such objects his means were ample; for the booty taken by Parmenio at Damascus, when that city surrendered to him without resistance, was a very important contribution to the expenses of the war. It was not long before Alexander found himself in possession of a considerable naval force, derived from various cities, Phœnician and otherwise. The princes of Cyprus placed at his disposal a fleet of a hundred and twenty ships of war; and the Macedonian conqueror was soon master of two hundred and fifty vessels, the largest and most effective of the Persian navy. By this change of allegiance, the maritime power of Persia was reduced to small dimensions, while Alexander became as strong by sea as by land. He next undertook a flying expedition against the Arabian mountaineers of Libanus, who had been giving some trouble, and whom he effectually quelled. Then, departing

from Sidon in his fleet, together with a reinforcement of four thousand Grecian troops, he sailed to Tyre, where the citizens were struck with astonishment and dismay at the sight of such an armament, many of the ships in which they knew to be those of Phœnician commonwealths. This, however, was not the first time that Phœnician vessels had aided in an attack on Tyre; for, when that place was besieged by the Assyrians under Shalmaneser II., four centuries earlier, Sidon and other cities contributed to the marine armament. On the present occasion, his naval force enabled Alexander to blockade the two harbours, and thus prevent the Tyrian vessels from coming forth to destroy the mole, which was at length finished, and pushed up close to the walls.

The place was then furiously assaulted with movable towers and other engines from the land side, while an attack was simultaneously made by sea. The Tyrians, however, continued to fight with the utmost resolution, and, amongst other means of reprisal, covered the besiegers with showers of heated sand, which, penetrating beneath their armour, inflicted great torment. The extreme thickness of the walls baffled for awhile the efforts of the Macedonians; but at last a practicable breach was effected in the southern defences. A general assault by land and sea was now ordered; two ships were rowed up close to the gap, and boarding-bridges were thrown out from the decks on to the shattered mass of masonry. Alexander and Admetus rushed forward with their storming parties. The latter was killed directly he got upon the wall; but Alexander pressed on, and the two bodies of assailants poured into the town, while the ships burst into the harbours, and completed the general ruin. Still refusing to yield, the Tyrians barricaded their streets, and fought with desperation until overpowered by the invaders. A terrible massacre ensued, and, even after the contest was over, two thousand were hanged on the sea-shore by order of Alexander. The women and children were sold into slavery; those who were already slaves were of course held in that state, and remained in the service of their conquerors, or were sent into other lands. After a siege of seven months, and great loss of life on both sides, especially on that of the besieged, Tyre lay at the mercy of Alexander, who treated it with unrelenting severity. He had resolved to make sacrifice to Melcarth, or Hercules, at his shrine in the newer city, and all his fighting men, arrayed in full armour, accompanied him to the temple. Success had again attended on him, but it was an immoral success, and it helped to debauch the mind of the victor. Alexander had no just excuse for attacking Tyre. Its rulers had signified their willingness to obey the orders of the Macedonian king in everything but the demand to enter their city; and this was certainly a fair reservation. But the madness of ambition had now taken full possession of Alexander, and everything was to be swept aside, or trampled underfoot, that thwarted his imperious will.

Shortly before the siege of Tyre reached its termination, Alexander received another letter from Darius, offering him 10,000 talents, a cession of all the territory west of the Euphrates, and the hand of his daughter in marriage, together with an alliance between the two monarchies. These things were tendered as ransom for the Persian king's wife and mother. On hearing the contents of the letter, Parmenio said, "If I were Alexander, I should accept such terms, instead of plunging into further perils." "And so would I," replied Alexander, "if I were Parmenio; but since I am Alexander, I must return a different answer." His reply was to the effect that he desired none of the promised concessions; that whatever he wanted he should take; and that if Darius sought any favours from him, he must come in person, and submit himself. Syria, Phœnicia, and Palestine were in undisputed possession of Alexander; but the conquerer did not feel himself secure until he had obtained all the coast-lands by which the Persians could keep up maritime communications with Greece. He therefore proceeded against Egypt, which, together with Phœnicia, had recently been recovered to the Persian Empire. The march of his army was accompanied by the movement of his fleet along the coast of Palestine; but he encountered a considerable obstacle in the city of Gaza, which held out for some months. Gaza lies on the edge of the desert extending between the Jewish territory and the confines of Egypt, at a point not far distant from the sea. Situated on a high artificial mound, protected by a lofty wall, and environed by sand and mud, it offered great difficulties even to a commander of the highest genius and enterprise. The engineers of Alexander himself pronounced the place impregnable; but it was not in their master's nature to confess himself baffled by anything. He therefore determined to besiege the city, which was defended by a black eunuch, named Batis, and a strong garrison of Arabs. Batis was amply provided with food and water, and his resolution to hold the position was well seconded by his troops.

As a preliminary to the assault, the assailants erected a mound on the south front of the

city; but this was overthrown by a sally of the besieged, and Alexander, in protecting the retreat of his men, received a wound in the shoulder from a dart discharged by one of the catapults. He afterwards ordered that the mound should be carried round the whole circumference of the town —a work of the most prodigious nature, since the height was two hundred and sixty feet, and the breadth 1,240 feet. Gaza was then attacked at all points by battering-rams, mines, and projectile engines. The defence, however, was so energetic that, even after the walls had been breached in several places, the besiegers were repulsed in three assaults. A fourth attempt was more successful, and Gaza was at length in the hands of the Macedonians, who slaughtered their antagonists as they stood. Batis is said to have been treated with shameful cruelty. Although this unfortunate commander was badly wounded, the conqueror directed that his feet should be bored, and that brazen rings should be passed through them; after which, his body, before life had yet quitted it, was dragged by cords at the tail of a chariot driven by Alexander himself. Such, at least, is the statement made by some of the ancient historians; but, as it is omitted by others, there is at least the possibility that it may be untrue. Supposing the event to have really happened, it was doubtless suggested to Alexander by the treatment of the dead body of Hector ascribed in the "Iliad" to Achilles. The population of Gaza were either slain or removed; new inhabitants were introduced from the surrounding country; and a garrison was placed there to hold the town while the rest of the army pursued its way to Egypt.

A tradition preserved by Josephus affirms that, after the siege of Gaza, Alexander visited Jerusalem. The Jews had for the last two centuries lived quietly under the rule of Persia, and, being allowed the full enjoyment of local freedom and of their own religion, were among the most loyal subjects of the Great King. They therefore refused the demand of submission said to have been made by Alexander during the siege of Tyre, and the conqueror, according to Josephus, marched to chastise them. The High Priest Jaddua went out to meet the advancing hosts, and awaited their arrival at the watch-station of Sapha, clad in purple and gold, and followed by an immense number of the people in robes of white. The story goes on to say that Alexander, on beholding this impressive spectacle, approached by himself, and adored the name of God engraved upon the golden plate in front of the High Priest's mitre; that he entered the Temple, and offered sacrifice to Jehovah according to the High Priest's direction; that the Jews treated him with the utmost respect, and showed him the Book of Daniel, wherein it is declared that one of the Greeks should destroy the Empire of the Persians —a prophecy which he applied to himself; that he granted certain privileges to all the Jews; and that, on departing, many of the people accompanied his armies. It is further related that when Parmenio asked him why he adored the High Priest of the Jews, he replied that he had not adored *him*, but the God by whom he was appointed, for that he had seen the same person in a dream when he was at Dium, in Macedonia, and had been exhorted to cross the sea without delay, when he would receive the dominion of Persia. He therefore believed himself under the divine conduct, and felt assured that he should vanquish Darius, destroy the power of the Persians, and succeed in all things according to what he desired.* This very striking narrative must be accepted, if at all, upon the unsupported testimony of Josephus. The incident is not mentioned by any other ancient author, though Quintus Curtius relates that Alexander, before passing into Egypt, visited some of the cities of Palestine which refused to submit to him. The tradition preserved by the Jewish historian is now generally held to possess little or no historic value; but it is one of those stories which cannot be altogether omitted from a complete view of ancient times.

Entering Egypt at Pelusium, Alexander found his fleet already there. The Egyptians crowded to welcome him, and, leaving a garrison in the city, he marched across the desert to Memphis. Here the satrap Mazakes immediately surrendered himself, and an immense treasure came into the hands of Alexander. The whole of Egypt, indeed, submitted with alacrity, as a relief from the insulting despotism of the Persians. The Macedonian hero rested himself for some time in this ancient and magnificent city, offering sacrifices to the god Apis and the other Egyptian deities, and entertaining the people with gymnastics and musical performances. He then sailed down the western branch of the Nile to Canopus, situated at its mouth. Seeing the advisability of removing the seat of government from Memphis to some spot upon the coast which would be more within his power, he determined to found a new metropolis on the shores of the Mediterranean. Hence arose the famous city of Alexandria, afterwards one of the most splendid and important capitals of the world —the great seat of commerce for Europe, Africa, and India, and an intellectual centre of the Greek

* Antiquities of the Jews, Book II., chap. 8.

race, which for several ages exercised a powerful influence over the philosophy and religion of the civilized world. Alexander himself marked out the circuit of the walls, the direction of the principal streets, and the sites of numerous temples, which were to be dedicated to Grecian and Egyptian deities. The site was on a narrow tongue of land stretching between Lake Mareotis and the sea, and the plan of the city was made to include the adjacent isle of Pharos, which was joined to the other part by a causeway. Two harbours were formed—one on each side of this causeway—for ships coming by sea; and Lake Mareotis was utilised for the reception of exportable produce from the interior. The nucleus of the population was mainly derived from the neighbouring town of Canopus. During the rule of the Ptolemies, Alexandria grew immensely in size, in grandeur, in population, and in wealth. Its Museum was celebrated in all civilised lands, and the Library of Alexandria (the destruction of which has been the subject of contradictory statements) contained the finest collection of Greek classics in the world. In this most interesting city, the East and the West may be said to have mingled as in a common centre; and from the consequent interchange of ideas between the more ancient and the more youthful communities of the world, Christianity itself received some of those elements which rank among the philosophical influences of a later epoch.

Alexander did not remain in Egypt more than five months at the utmost; but his stay there was in many respects remarkable. After founding the city to which he gave his own name, he determined to visit the temple of Jupiter Ammon, situated in the oasis of the Libyan desert, now called Siwah. The Jupiter Ammon of the western nations was the god Amun, or Amen, of the Egyptian religion; and he had always been regarded by the Hellenes as a form of their own Zeus. The oracle attached to his shrine was one of the most renowned in the ancient world, and Alexander sought to obtain a response which should set at rest the question whether he was or was not, in the most literal sense of the term, a son of the chief Olympian deity. Starting westward from the Delta towards the close of 332 B.C., he made his way along the coast for about two hundred miles; then, turning south, he struck across the parching sands towards the oasis which spread its verdure round the temple of the god. His journey thither, according to the statements of his companions, Ptolemy, Aristobulus, and Callisthenes, was attended by miraculous circumstances. Rain fell unexpectedly when the soldiers were perishing of thirst; and when a shifting of the sand, not unusual in that region, had obliterated the track, two speaking serpents, or two ravens, led the expedition back into the right direction. Thus guided, Alexander approached the shrine of Jupiter Ammon, and was received with special honour by the priests. He consulted the oracle in secret, and, according to some accounts, never disclosed its answer. Other accounts, however, state that he was addressed as the veritable son of Zeus, and was assured that his career would be one of uninterrupted victory until he was taken away by the gods. It is also related that his friends, on consulting the same oracle, were told that the rendering of divine honours to him would be acceptable to the deity. Even on the supposition that Alexander never revealed the nature of the response which he had obtained, it may fairly be inferred that it was of a character flattering to his vanity, for he offered magnificent sacrifices in the temple, and made costly presents to the shrine. His effigy on subsequent coins bears the horn which was a sacred symbol of Ammon as manifested in the form of a ram; and declarations of his divine origin were afterwards transmitted to him from Grecian oracles. Some of the leading Macedonians, however, were angered at this imputed parentage, which they justly regarded as an insult to the memory of Philip; but Alexander had obtained what he wished, and was enabled to feed his prodigious vanity by the reflection that he was more than mortal. From that time forth, a species of madness seems to have taken possession of him. He was indeed drunk with success, with the consciousness of extraordinary powers, and with the arrogant dream of superhuman might.

While on his way to the temple of Jupiter Ammon, Alexander had been met by envoys from the Greek colony of Cyrene, bringing presents of great value, including five chariots and three hundred war-horses. In the early spring of 331 B.C., he returned to Phœnicia, and, after conducting splendid festivals at Tyre, set out for Thapsacus, on the Euphrates, where he arrived about the end of August. His design now was to seek out Darius, and inflict on him a defeat which should transfer the whole Empire of Western Asia into his own hands. A detachment had been sent in advance, to throw two bridges over the river, and, finding these completed, Alexander crossed at once. He had reason to believe that Darius was posted with an immense force on the further bank of the Tigris; but, on arriving at the stream a little above Nineveh, he found no one to oppose his passage. The Persian king was in truth encamped on an extensive plain between the

river and the mountains of Kurdistan, near the village of Gaugamela,—"the Camel's House,"—so called because the great Darius, when returning from his Scythian expedition, left at that spot the camel on which he had ridden, and appointed the revenue of certain villages for its maintenance. The baggage and treasure of the later Darius had been deposited at the town of Arbela, some twenty or thirty miles off, and the ensuing battle takes its name from that place. Darius had now gathered about him another large army, and, believing that mainly from distant provinces in the east, the north, and the south—from the vicinity of the Indus, from lands bordering on the Oxus and Jaxartes, and from the desert spaces of Arabia. Many of these warriors were of a wild and barbarian order; but a body of 50,000 Greek mercenaries furnished a centre of discipline to the enormous and ill-regulated mass. The weapons and shields worn by many of the soldiers had been copied from Macedonian examples; but the character of Darius's hosts must in some respects

ALEXANDER AT THE TEMPLE OF JUPITER AMMON.

his failure at Issus was due to the fact of the contest having taken place in a narrow valley, where numbers were of no avail, he determined this time to select a large champaign for the scene of his operations. The stake for which he fought was his very existence as a sovereign. The western and larger half of his immense empire—all, indeed, that was most valuable in its heterogeneous composition—was already lost, and it is probable that he had but little hope of regaining it. But the ancient realms of Media and Persis—those from which the empire itself had sprung, like a massive and far-shadowing tree—might perhaps be yet retained, together with the dependencies most remote from Europe. The army which was now drawn up to receive the invader had been derived have been very different from anything known to Alexander or his countrymen. Fifteen Indian elephants were attached to the force, and two hundred scythed chariots, of very elaborate construction, were in readiness to inflict damage on the ranks of the enemy.

It was to draw the invader to the neighbourhood of Gaugamela that the fords of the Tigris had been left open. Had any man less resolute and influential than Alexander been in command of the Macedonians, it is possible that a mutiny among the troops might have arrested his progress. The Tigris had long been regarded by Europeans as a limit beyond which it was dangerous to advance. The country on the further side was little known, and the existence of two mighty rivers in

ALEXANDER AND THE BODY OF DARIUS.

the rear was a circumstance which not unnaturally created nervous apprehension. The Greeks who accompanied the expedition of the younger Cyrus had murmured at being asked to cross even the western stream, and it is not surprising that the warriors of Alexander should have hesitated at venturing beyond the eastern channel. Their fears were increased by an eclipse of the moon, which occurred shortly after the passage of the Tigris on the 20th of September. But, being assured by Alexander's astrologers that the darkness was owing to the Greek god Helios asserting his power over the Persian goddess Selene, they once more took heart, and resumed the march, bending in a south-easterly direction. Four days after quitting the Tigris, Alexander (who had derived the information he required from some prisoners) found himself within seven miles of the Persian army. Having allowed his troops to rest another four days, he made a night march, and, on ascending a low ridge of sand-hills at daybreak, beheld the Persian array stretching far across the undulating plain. Darius was in the centre, surrounded by his body-guard, and by the Greek mercenaries; in front were the war-chariots, the cavalry, and the elephants, disposed in three bodies; and in the rear were large masses of inferior troops, who, however indifferent in quality, must have contributed to the appearance of multitudinous and threatening power.

Acting on the advice of Parmenio, Alexander halted for a day to reconnoitre the ground, and then formed an intrenched camp at a distance of about three miles from the enemy. The Macedonian army consisted of not more than 40,000 foot and 7,000 horse; so that the forces were exceedingly disproportioned. Perceiving that he had no longer the advantage of narrow ground, by which he could make the most of his small numbers, Alexander adopted a different order of battle to that which had proved effective on previous occasions, and so arranged his troops as to give them the utmost available solidity, while at the same time guarding himself against any attempt upon his rear, or on either of his flanks. He took his own station on the right, opposite to the Persian left-centre, and led his division into action in an oblique direction, calculated to baffle any flanking movement that might be contemplated by his adversary. The Persians had been so apprehensive of a surprise that they had stood under arms the whole of the previous night, with the result that they were nearly exhausted when the battle commenced. Nevertheless, many of them fought with considerable spirit, and the Bactrians on the Persian left succeeded for a time in checking the advance of Alexander. After a while, their line became too much spread, and, when the division of the Macedonian king had been strengthened by the light horse, the Persian left was broken. During the progress of this contest, Darius had ordered his scythed chariots to charge, and his main line to follow them. But the Macedonian troops contrived to stop the advance of the horses by a flight of arrows and darts, and in some instances even seized the reins, and pulled down the drivers. Such of the horses as were not killed became terrified and unmanageable. Some turned round, and galloped back, alarmed at the protruded pikes, and at the clashing noise made by the Macedonians striking their weapons on their shields. A few bore straight on, but did little damage, owing to the celerity with which Alexander's legions opened their ranks, and let them through. The main body of the Persian troops was now laid bare to attack, and Alexander, who had hitherto ordered strict silence to be maintained, gave directions that his men should raise the war-shout, and charge at a quick pace. He himself wheeled round towards the centre, where he knew that Darius would be stationed. A furious encounter followed. The combat was close and desperate, and the phalanx, pressing hard upon their adversaries, inflicted immense damage with their long pikes. Nevertheless, both the native Persians and the Greek auxiliaries maintained an obstinate resistance; but Darius, seeing the near approach of Alexander, again lost courage, and, turning his war-chariot from the field, took to precipitate flight, as in the previous affair at Issus. He was of course immediately followed by his personal attendants, and then by the troops forming the centre of his line of battle. Alexander at once started in pursuit; but the dust raised by the enormous throng was so dense that the royal fugitive made his escape, although the pursuers were to some extent guided on their way by the multitudinous noises which issued from the dark and arid cloud.

The left of the Macedonian line had encountered greater difficulties. Parmenio, indeed, was so greatly overmatched by the Asiatic cavalry under Mazæus as to be compelled to seek aid from Alexander. A number of Indian and Persian horsemen, finding a gap in that part of the Macedonian line, penetrated as far as the camp, where they began to plunder the baggage; and the movement was so far successful that the Persian prisoners were temporarily set free, though Sisygambis refused to avail herself of the apparent

opportunity to escape. Ultimately, however, they were repulsed with heavy loss; and when the commander of the Persian right learned that the king himself had deserted the field, followed by the entire centre, he gave the order for retreat, since further resistance was evidently hopeless. Following their companions, who were by this time considerably in advance, the horsemen of the right wing were confronted by Alexander, who, having given up the pursuit of Darius, was hastening to the succour of Parmenio. The collision which followed was the most sanguinary struggle of the day; for the object of the Macedonians was to annihilate the whole division, while the Persians made desperate endeavours to cut their way through the opposing body. This they were at length enabled to do, and Alexander then effected a junction with Parmenio, and gave orders for a general pursuit. In the encounter with the Persian right, the life of Alexander was placed in great peril; sixty of the Companions were killed, and some of the principal officers wounded. Another brilliant success, however, had rewarded the Macedonian king. The whole Persian army was in panic-stricken flight, and the pursuit, which was closely pressed, was attended by terrific losses to the defeated army. The immense masses of troops in the rear, who had not been engaged at all, served only to block the way. The army before long degenerated into a frantic mob, the members of which, getting entangled with one another, added to the loss by their wild endeavours to escape. The Lycus, or Greater Zab—an affluent of the Tigris—lay in front of the fugitives, having been crossed by Darius a few days before the battle; and this was an obstruction to the flight which added yet another element of misery to the unhappy situation. Multitudes were slain at the passage of the river; large numbers of prisoners were taken; and the Macedonians, being utterly exhausted by the pursuit, were compelled to pause for a brief rest. Alexander, however, did not permit them any lengthened repose, for, starting again at midnight, he pressed on towards Arbela, which he entered the following day. Here he found the bow, shield, and chariot of the vanquished king, together with his stores and treasures; and a great prize was also secured by Parmenio at the Persian camp, where camels, elephants, and baggage, fell into the hands of the conquerors.

The date of the battle of Arbela is thought to have been about the 1st of October, 331 B.C. By this signal triumph, Alexander completely shattered the Persian army, which thenceforward was unable to offer any effectual resistance to the invader. In every direction, the power of the great Asiatic monarchy was destroyed; for in the previous year, while Alexander was besieging Tyre, two of his admirals in the Ægean had taken such vigorous action against the Persian fleet in that sea that all the islands which had acknowledged the sway of Persia were recovered, and placed once more on their legitimate footing as Greek communities. Thus, in Europe and in Asia—at the extremities of the empire, and at its heart—the unwieldy military system of Darius fell to pieces before the onslaught of a great military genius, commanding a force comparatively small, but perfect in every detail, and animated by that feeling of self-reliance which is always inspired by a commander who knows how to extort success. Darius was imbecile and cowardly; Alexander was courageous and full of infinite resource. The youthful energy of Europe had matched itself against the effete despotism of the East; and the result was such as Alexander had anticipated with confidence, although men like Demosthenes had committed the incredible mistake of supposing that Greece could worthily and safely ally herself with a monarch such as Darius, and a dominion such as Persia.

After his victory at Arbela, Alexander marched straight to Babylon—a city which, as one of the ancient seats of empire, possessed a great attraction for him. As he approached the walls, he found the road flanked with silver altars, smoking with perfumed sacrifices. Flowers were strewn upon the way; the satrap Mazæus came out to meet the victor with the keys of the great city; and large numbers of the population, headed by the Chaldæan priests, poured forth with acclamations, with rejoicings, and with presents. At the same time, Susa, the chief capital of the Persian Empire, was yielded to Philoxenus. A large sum was seized at Babylon, and a larger at Susa. It is stated by Arrian that at the latter city 50,000 talents, equal to about £11,500,000, fell to the disposal of the Macedonians, who also found there the spoils carried from Greece by Xerxes, including amongst other things two bronze statues of Aristogiton and Harmodius, which Alexander sent back to Athens. Large rewards were distributed amongst the troops; but of course the greater part of the treasure was reserved for the further expenses of the war. In the luxurious city of Babylon—even then a place of importance, though no longer the metropolis of an independent empire—Alexander and his soldiers rested for more than thirty days. With that politic regard for the local religious

feeling which always characterised the Macedonian hero, Alexander ordered solemn sacrifices to Belus, and directed that the temples formerly destroyed by Xerxes should be rebuilt. The Babylonians, like the people of Egypt, had suffered from the religious intolerance of the Persian kings, who, while acting with extreme generosity towards the Jews, had severely discountenanced the idolatrous rites which they found on the banks of the Nile, and in other parts of their dominions. It is not surprising, therefore, that both Egypt and Babylon regarded Alexander as a friend, who would relieve them from oppression; and Alexander, being himself an idolater, was not likely to be offended by forms of worship which had a certain affinity with his own. During his stay at Babylon, the Macedonian king asserted his rights of sovereignty over the Persian Empire by appointing new satraps to the several provinces, or confirming in their posts such of the existing officials as he considered likely to serve him well. Towards the middle of November, 331 B.C., he removed to Susa, where he received a reinforcement of 15,000 men, consisting of Macedonians, Greeks, and Thracians. He also remodelled his army in all its departments, and then, crossing the river Eulæus, marched in a south-easterly direction towards Persia Proper. On his road thither, the Uxii, a warlike tribe inhabiting a mountainous region, demanded from Alexander the same tribute they had been in the habit of obtaining from the Persian kings whenever those monarchs travelled from Susa to Persepolis. Alexander invited them to meet him at a certain pass, and receive it; then, making his way over a little-known track which had been pointed out to him, he surprised the Uxii in their own villages, and inflicted on them so severe a chastisement that they sued for pardon.

Notwithstanding this success, the Macedonian king was in a position of some danger, and, when on his road to Persepolis, received a serious check from Ariobarzanes, the satrap of Persis, who was stationed in a difficult defile called the Susan or Persian Gates. His attempt to force the pass was repelled by the Persian commander; but, a Lycian captive having revealed to him a circuitous path over the snow-clad heights, he descended on his opponent's flank, while one of his lieutenants renewed the attack in front. The force commanded by Ariobarzanes was thus defeated and dispersed, and Alexander shortly afterwards entered Persepolis, which was given up to him by Tiridates, the commander of the garrison. In the neighbourhood of Persepolis, the conquerors were exasperated by the sight of eight hundred Greek captives mutilated in various ways, according to the Persian custom. These unfortunate men were settled on lands which Alexander assigned to them, and it was then decreed by the conqueror that, as a punishment for such atrocities, Persepolis should be sacked. The royal treasure (amounting, it is said, to £27,600,000) was accordingly placed on five thousand camels, and in ten thousand mule-carts, which had been specially brought from Mesopotamia and other districts; and the city was given up to pillage and devastation.* Alexander, according to some accounts, set fire to the palace with his own hand, being incited to the act, when intoxicated at a banquet, by the Athenian courtezan, Thais. The story, however, is very doubtful, and it is at any rate certain that the entire city of Persepolis was not destroyed by Alexander, as some have supposed, for it was standing until ruined by fanatical Arabs in the Mohammedan times. Nevertheless, the persons and property of the citizens were abandoned to the license of Alexander's soldiers, who indulged in a frightful orgie, varied occasionally by bloody quarrels among themselves. The sack of Persepolis, with the slaughter of many of its inhabitants, and the sending of the rest into slavery, may receive some slight palliation from the cruelties previously inflicted on the Greek captives; but such acts can never, under any circumstances, be justified, and it would seem that in this instance Alexander was as much swayed by motives of policy as by indignation at a gross and manifest wrong. He feared that Persepolis, if allowed to retain its dignity and importance, might become a focus of disaffection against his rule, since it was in that part of Persia that the national spirit was the strongest, and the most closely associated with historic glories.

While his head-quarters were still at Persepolis, Alexander visited the tomb of Cyrus at Pasargadæ, the primitive capital of Persia. He did not, however, neglect active operations, and the whole of Persia was quickly reduced by a flying column, which had to endure severe hardships in the midst of a barren and mountainous country, made still more irksome by the dead of winter. It was now the early part of 330 B.C., and, in the spring, the conqueror, after a short rest at Persepolis, started on the track of Darius, who had fled to Ecbatana. When Alexander was known to be approaching that city, the vanquished king departed in a north-

* The amount of treasure said to have been found at Persepolis may at first sight appear incredible; but it is related that when Nadir Shah conquered the Mogul Emperor, in 1739 of the Christian era, he found in Delhi treasure and effects to the amount of £32,000,000 sterling.

easterly direction, hoping to shroud himself in the deserts of Central Asia. Leaving Ecbatana behind him, Alexander pushed on through Media with unresting speed, so that in eleven days his men had traversed three hundred miles. At Rhagæ, the Macedonian sovereign learned that his adversary (if such he might still be termed) had passed over Mount Elburz through the narrow defile called the Caspian Gates. After five days' rest, the pursuers followed by the same track; but Darius was still some distance ahead, moving towards the east. He was now no longer master of his own actions, being a captive to Bessus, satrap of Bactria, Barsaentes, another of the provincial governors, and Nabarzanes, general of the royal guards. Bessus had held an important command at the battle of Arbela, and his present design appears to have been to carry Darius into Bactria, where it was possible that a stand might be made in his name, but, in the event of Alexander coming up with them, to make terms by the sacrifice of the fallen monarch. The wretched king was bound with chains of gold, and conveyed in a covered chariot, closely guarded by Bactrian troops, who prevented the accompanying body of Greek mercenaries from doing anything on behalf of their master, and finally caused them to retire.

When, a day's march beyond the Caspian Gates, Alexander was informed of these facts by two Persian noblemen, he pressed forward with all speed, though the month was now July, and the weather extremely hot, and though several men and horses died of fatigue. The fugitive still continued to evade him; but, by a shorter route through the waterless desert bordering on Hyrcania, which he traversed by a night-march of five and forty miles, he suddenly came on Bessus and his captive in the early morning, near the city of Hecatompylos, in Parthia. The Persian soldiers were so dismayed by the appearance of Alexander and his cavalry that they fled without making any attempt to defend the king or the satraps. Bessus suggested to Darius that he should continue his flight on a swift horse; but whatever spirit the king may once have possessed was now entirely worn out, and he declared that he would throw himself on the mercy of his conqueror. Perceiving that, if Alexander should obtain possession of the Persian sovereign, the allegiance of the provinces would be at once secured, the conspirators transfixed Darius with javelins, and pursued their flight. The fallen king was discovered dying by a Macedonian soldier, to whom, after begging for water, he gave a message to Alexander, thanking him for the generous treatment of his wife and mother. The conqueror, on coming up shortly afterwards, found his rival dead. He threw his cloak over the body as it lay stiffening on the rugged Parthian lands, and granted to it a royal funeral in the sepulchres of the Persian kings.

CHAPTER XLVI.

ALEXANDER IN EASTERN ASIA.

Progress of Alexander—Conquest of Hyrcania, Aria, and Drangiana—Growing Unpopularity of Alexander—Suspected Plot against his Life—Execution of Philotas and Parmenio—Operations in Gedrosia and Arachosia—Passage of the Paropamisus—Conquest of Bactria, and Capture of Bessus—Extermination of the Branchidæ—Reduction of Sogdiana—Attack on the Scythians—Insubordination among the Sogdians—Drunken Festival at Maracanda—Murder of Clitus—Remorse of Alexander—Capture of the Sogdian Rock—Claim by Alexander to Divine Honours—Arbitrary Treatment of Callisthenes—Designs on India—Population and Previous History of that Country—Relations between India and Persia—Character of the Indian People—Crossing of the Indus by the Macedonian Army—Defeat of Porus—Conquest of the Punjâb—Mutiny of the Macedonian Soldiers—Return of Alexander to the West—Descent of the Hydaspes—Personal Danger of Alexander in Storming a City—Arrival at the Indian Ocean—The Voyage of Nearchus—Sufferings of Alexander's Troops in the Sandy Deserts of Gedrosia—Bacchanalian Procession through Carmania—Alexander and Nearchus—Schemes for the Fusion of Nationalities—Rebellion of the Troops—Death of Hephæstion, and Irrational Grief of Alexander—Expedition against the Cossæi—The Approach of the End.

In little more than four years, Alexander had broken the might of Persia, and won his way from the Hellespont to the borders of Parthia. Asia Minor had been liberated as by enchantment. The older seats of dominion had fallen in rapid succession before the conqueror's arms. Assyria, Babylon, and Egypt had submitted to his rule with little or no resistance. The realm of Solomon was his; the great commercial republics of Phœnicia were powerless to arrest the progress of this fiery

apostle of the sword. Syria, with its ancient and splendid city of Damascus, was but a section in the vast sweep of his empire. Susa and Persepolis had yielded to him their accumulated treasures; and at Pasargadæ he had stood before the tomb of Cyrus, a greater conqueror than the monarch who lay proudly sepulchred beneath the monumental stone. He had passed through Media like a thunderbolt, cleaving his way still farther to the north and east; and Ecbatana now lay behind him, a mere station for his troops, and receptacle for his wealth. Had Alexander been a man of ordinary ambition, he might well have rested content with what he had achieved. Had he been more amenable to moral considerations than he was, he would have sheathed his sword on the death of Darius. The liberation of the Greek colonies of Asia Minor—the only real justification of the war—had been accomplished; and the great Persian Empire, which formerly had menaced the whole south-east of Europe, was so completely shattered that any recovery of its former predominance over Hellenic communities was extremely improbable. Hostilities should therefore have been brought to an end shortly after the brilliant triumph of Arbela. But Alexander was by this time inflamed with the passion of military glory—the most corrupting influence to which human nature is liable. He had told Sisygambis that he fought for the empire of Asia. The empire of the world seemed now scarcely sufficient for the enormity of his desires.

Being thus resolved to extend his conquests for the mere pride of dominion, he entered Hyrcania in the latter part of 330 B.C., and took possession of Zadracarta, a city near the southern shores of the Caspian. Having next subdued the Mardians—a warlike tribe, who relied in vain on the protection of their forests and mountains—he marched through Parthia into Aria, where he founded a city to which was given the name of Alexandria Ariorum, and which in our days is familiar to the world as Herat. Then, pursuing a southern route, he penetrated into Drangiana (the modern Seistan), where no resistance was offered to his progress. The capital of Drangiana was the city of Prophthasia, and here a tragical incident occurred. The character of Alexander had for some time past undergone a considerable change, and that very much for the worse. Depraved by unbroken success, by the flattery of his worshippers, and by the evil example of Oriental despotisms, he had lost all that was Greek, or even European, in his nature, and had acquired the disposition and manners, while he even assumed the dress, of an Asiatic monarch. He was now invariably surrounded by Persian attendants, and offending Macedonians were scourged by Persian hands. The more distinguished among his captains—especially those who had served under his father, and who had been accustomed to a very different demeanour—resented this assertion of immeasurable superiority, and began to look on their master with feelings of discontent, powerfully contrasting with the popularity of the youthful hero when he began the war, and carried it through its earlier stages. They were opposed to a further prosecution of hostilities, and were offended with the ostentatious claim of Alexander to be considered the son of Zeus. The king was aware of these feelings, and began to be suspicious of plots for which the materials were not wholly wanting.

While staying at Prophthasia, Alexander received intelligence that a design had been formed against his life. The head of the alleged conspiracy was a soldier named Dimnus (who was afterwards slain, together with others), and the fact came to the knowledge of the commander of the Companion-cavalry, Philotas, son of Parmenio, the chief man in the army after Alexander himself, and one of the most trusted generals of Philip. Although in habitual communication with the king, Philotas neglected for two whole days to say anything to him about the asserted plot, and it was at length by the informant of Philotas that Alexander was warned. When asked why he had omitted to reveal what he had heard, he replied that the original author of the report was a person too contemptible to deserve notice: a sufficiently lame excuse, but one which Alexander appears to have received as satisfactory. He had, however, been secretly incensed against Philotas ever since the invasion of Egypt, because of the depreciatory criticisms on himself in which that commander, together with his father Parmenio, had frequently indulged. A treacherous mistress of Philotas had repeated several of his remarks, which were to the general effect that he and Parmenio had been the principal conquerors of Asia; that Alexander by himself would have achieved nothing; and that the king had acted wrongly in accepting divine honours from the oracle of Jupiter Ammon. Alexander therefore determined on the condemnation and death of Philotas, but first of all obtained, according to an old Macedonian custom, the judgment of the army in general. Philotas was disliked by the soldiers, and they pronounced against him, as Alexander, doubtless, had good reason to believe they would. The unhappy man was put to the torture, and at length induced to confess his guilt, and also to implicate his father. His execution

DEFEAT OF PORUS BY THE MACEDONIANS.

followed; and Parmenio was then treacherously assassinated, by order of his royal master, as he walked in his grounds at Ecbatana, where he had been left in command of the garrison placed there to guard the treasure. Parmenio was seventy years of age, and his long and important services merited a better fate. He was popular with his men, who broke into open mutiny when they heard of the assassination, and were only with difficulty pacified by the exhibition of the king's written order. The body of the deceased general was given to them for burial; but the head, having been previously cut off, was sent to Alexander, in proof that his commands had been obeyed. The story is tragical and revolting, and exhibits the great conqueror in an evil light. It must be admitted that the conduct of Philotas was such as to warrant the suspicion that he was a traitor; but against Parmenio there was no evidence of any value, and the manner of destroying him was detestable in its treachery and vindictiveness.

Alexander now turned his attention to fresh enterprises, such as might divert the discontent which he knew had been excited among several of his followers by his treatment of Philotas and Parmenio. Previous to any fresh movement, however, he separated the Companion-cavalry into two divisions, one of which was placed under the direction of Hephæstion, while Clitus was appointed to the other. He also formed a distinct division out of those officers and soldiers whom he had reason to believe were ill-affected towards himself, hoping in this way to prevent the spread of their opinions among the rest. His army was now augmented by a considerable proportion of the Greek mercenaries who had served under Darius, and who submitted themselves to the will of the victor. Thus strengthened, Alexander employed the autumn of 330 B.C. and the ensuing winter in reducing Gedrosia, Arachosia, and the Paropamisadæ, corresponding in modern geography to Beloochistan and Afghanistan. While in Arachosia, he is thought to have founded another city named after himself, which is sometimes identified with Candahar; but it is not absolutely certain that the city was commenced by him. The winter of 329 B.C. being near its close, he crossed the immense mountain-range of Paropamisus, to which the Greeks gave the name of Caucasus, but which is now known as the Hindoo-Koosh. His army was fifteen days accomplishing the passage, and, as the ground was covered with deep snow, and totally devoid of wood, the men suffered severely. At the foot of one of these mountains he founded, previous to crossing it, another memorial city, called Alexandria ad Caucasum, in which he planted 7,000 of his old soldiers as colonists. As an immense number of Greek coins and other Hellenic relics have been discovered at the modern town of Beghram, twenty-five miles north-east of Cabul, it is considered that this particular city may have been somewhere in that neighbourhood; but the point is doubtful. Having gained the northern side of the Paropamisus, Alexander entered Bactria; but Bessus, the satrap of that province, who had now assumed the rank and title of king, fled before him across the Oxus into Sogdiana. In the early summer, the Macedonian sovereign followed his enemy across the river, and was soon rewarded by the capture of Bessus, who was betrayed by two of his own officers. After upbraiding him for his treason to Darius, Alexander ordered the satrap to be scourged, and sent in chains to Zariaspa, or Bactra (the modern Balkh); and at a subsequent period he was condemned to the Persian punishment of mutilation of the nose and ears, and despatched to Ecbatana, that the Medes and Persians might finally deal with him as they chose. He appears to have been ultimately put to death, with the barbarity usual among Oriental races.

In marching through Sogdiana, Alexander approached a small town inhabited by the Branchidæ, descendants of certain Greeks who in earlier times had charge of the temple of Apollo near Miletus, and who, having surrendered the treasures of that fane to Xerxes, were by him removed to Sogdiana, to save them from the vengeance of their fellow-countrymen. The inhabitants of the town poured forth to welcome the legions of Alexander, who, choosing to regard himself as the avenger of Apollo's violated shrine, ordered the entire people to be massacred, and their city to be utterly destroyed. No mention of this atrocious act is to be found in Arrian; but Alexander had by this time developed so wild a spirit of Asiatic ferocity that the circumstance seems not improbable. Proceeding on his way, the resistless conqueror took Maracanda (now Samarcand), and, having thus reduced Sogdiana to obedience for the time being, advanced to the Jaxartes, a river forming the boundary between the Persian Empire and the deserts of Scythia. Here he founded the most distant of the cities that bore his name—a town believed to be identical with the modern Khojend. While still in Sogdiana, he crossed the Jaxartes, and attacked an army of Scythian wanderers whom he thought it advisable to disperse. The passage of the river was performed on the inflated tent-skins of the soldiers (a mode of transport long

before practised by the Assyrians), and the barbarians were pursued to a considerable distance into the desert. But the heat of the weather, and the bad character of the water, which was also deficient in quantity, produced an illness that nearly proved fatal to the Macedonian king. The expedition is worthy of notice chiefly as marking the utmost limit of the conqueror's progress northwards. He then retired into winter-quarters at Bactra, but early in 328 B.C. again crossed the Oxus, that he might complete the subjugation of Sogdiana, where the people, under the leadership of an energetic commander named Spitamenes, and with the assistance of the neighbouring Scythians, were offering a determined resistance. Dividing his army into five bodies, Alexander scoured the country in as many directions, and, after establishing several military posts, reunited his forces at Maracanda, the chief place of Sogdiana.

The halt at this city, which had been rendered necessary by the fatigues of the troops, has become memorable on account of the tragedy which happened there. Alexander, while staying at Maracanda, gave full indulgence to those habits of revelry which had of late become frequent with him. On a certain occasion, a grand banquet was given by the Macedonian king to his chief officers; and when all were far gone in intoxication, some of the hero's flatterers began a strain of immoderate eulogy, affirming that their master had, by deeds of superhuman valour, proved his divine paternity, and that an apotheosis like that of Hercules was due to him even in life. Alexander not only accepted these tributes, but himself took credit for the later victories of his father, whose abilities he depreciated. Clitus, who had saved the life of Alexander at the battle of the Granicus, could not endure these arrogant assumptions, and was especially offended at the insults levelled at the memory of Philip. Being flushed with wine, and therefore beyond the power of self-control, he gave free expression to his outraged feelings, protested against the injustice done to the late king, and pronounced the achievements of Philip to be at least equal, if not superior, to those of his son. Proceeding with his criticisms, he alleged that the great instruments of Alexander's victories had been Philip's old soldiers, and he referred in particular to Parmenio, whom the king had ungratefully put to death. It is perhaps surprising that Alexander should have permitted him to proceed thus far; but the king appears to have been overwhelmed with astonishment, while Clitus, carried away by the rush of his emotions, which, after long suppression, had at length found an outlet, passed from one imprudence to another. Finally, stretching out his right hand towards Alexander, he exclaimed, "Recollect that you owe your life to me; this hand preserved you at the Granicus. Listen to the outspoken language of truth, or abstain from asking freemen to supper, and confine yourself to the society of barbaric slaves."

This appears to have been the climax of the speaker's invectives. Alexander recovered from his stupefaction, and, starting from the royal couch, felt for his dagger, that he might rush at Clitus. The weapon had been put out of reach by one of the attendants, who had foreseen what was too likely to happen; but Alexander was not to be baulked of his revenge. Summoning the bodyguard about him, he ordered the trumpeter to sound an alarm, and was amazed to find that his commands were not obeyed. Ptolemy, Perdiccas, and other of his principal officers, clung round him with earnest entreaties that he would abstain from violence. Some tried to silence Clitus, and to hurry him out of the royal presence; but their interposition came too late. The banqueting-hall was in uproar and confusion. Clitus, growing more resolute in his defiance, refused to retire, and Alexander became more furious by the very efforts to restrain him. He shouted that his officers held him in chains, as Bessus had held Darius; he declared that they left him nothing but the name of king. At length, bursting away from them, he snatched a pike from one of the soldiers, and, rushing upon Clitus, drove it through his body, with the exclamation, "Go now to Philip and Parmenio!" The act was one of uncontrollable frenzy, for which, it must be admitted, the provocation was not slight; but it was followed by an immediate revulsion of feeling. The man who had saved his life lay weltering in blood upon the floor, a victim of the king's drunken passion. The courtiers stood round, transfixed with horror; and Alexander, hastening from the room in an agony of remorse, took to his bed, where he passed three days without food or drink, denouncing himself as unworthy to live after having requited the services of his friend with so foul a murder. When nearly exhausted by grief and abstinence, he consented once more to take food, and received with growing complacency the excuses, or rather the flatteries, of his courtiers. He was assured that his act had arisen from a species of divine madness brought upon him by the god Dionysus, to avenge the omission of a sacrifice to that deity previous to the banquet; that, even independently of such an influence, he was entitled as a king to prescribe for himself what was right and just; and that, conse-

quently, his regret was in truth a generous weakness. Such are the perversions of morality and reason which debauch the intellects and deprave the consciences of successful despots. But they had the effect of lulling the remorse of Alexander, and of restoring him once more to that life of action which he seemed for the moment to have renounced.*

Sogdiana was still fermenting with rebellion, and Alexander, on recovering his tranquillity, conducted his army through the most mountainous parts of the country, enduring great fatigue and hardship, and attacking a number of rocky positions which could not be taken without considerable efforts. Early in the year 327 B.C. he marched against a fortress called the Sogdian Rock—an isolated hill, so precipitous as to be considered inaccessible to an enemy. Alexander summoned the garrison to surrender, and was answered by a scornful inquiry as to whether the Macedonian soldiers had wings. A small body of troops was then sent forward to scale the heights, and the garrison surrendered when they found that their assailants were able, even without the possession of wings, to approach the vaunted fortress. After subduing another stronghold with an equal reputation for impregnability, Alexander returned once more to Bactra in the spring. The resistance of the Sogdians had now been overcome, and the Scythians, being completely discouraged, had slain Spitamenes, and sent his head to the conqueror as a propitiatory offering.

Among the captives taken in the fortress of the Sogdian Rock was a woman of extraordinary beauty named Roxana, who had been sent there for safety by her father Oxyartes, a Bactrian. Alexander was so captivated by this woman that he resolved to marry her, and the nuptials were celebrated at Bactra. During the festivities that followed this event, the Macedonian sovereign suggested, through the agency of some Persians and a number of Greek sophists, that divine honours should be paid to him at once. The proposal was made at a banquet, and opposed by the philosopher Callisthenes of Olynthus (a nephew of Aristotle), who, while admitting that Alexander had earned the highest honours compatible with human nature, argued against the impiety of placing him on a level with the gods. The Persians, and several of the Greeks and Macedonians, made abject prostrations before the king; but Callisthenes refused to do so, and of course provoked the enmity of his master. Nevertheless, the proposal for divine honours was evidently so distasteful to the more influential and dignified of the Macedonians that Alexander found it prudent not to insist upon so extravagant a demand. His anger against Callisthenes, however, soon found an opportunity for its gratification. The philosopher, who had accompanied the king on his campaigns for the purpose of writing a history of his great exploits, was ultimately tortured and hanged as an accomplice in a conspiracy which had been formed among the royal pages, one of whom had been scourged by order of Alexander for having anticipated the monarch in killing a wild boar which was rushing up to attack him. The arrogance, injustice, and cruelty of the conqueror had obliterated all those better feelings by which in earlier years his wild and vehement character had been to some extent relieved.

The regards of Alexander were now attracted towards a land which hitherto has appeared but little on the stage of Universal History. Beyond the currents of the Indus extended a vast and little-known territory, which in later ages has been the scene of many great and striking events, but which, although it could even then boast an ancient civilization, was, in the time of Alexander, almost entirely cut off from the western world. Such intercourse as existed was chiefly commercial. The Arabians traded with the remote people beyond the Indus, and brought their commodities to inland towns, where they were readily purchased by the Phœnicians. Some of the Indian products even found their way to Europe, being conveyed from the Persian Gulf up the Euphrates to Thapsacus, and thence transported in caravans across the Syrian desert to the Mediterranean. But all this furnished little or no information as to the land, the people, or the progress of historical events. Under the appellation of India, the Greeks seem to have comprised the whole region extending east of Persia and Bactria as far as the country of the Sinæ (supposed to be the same as Cochin China), and from the limits of the Scythian desert in the north to the great ocean in the south. At a somewhat later date than that of Alexander, the ancient geographers divided this immense tract into *India intra Gangem* and *India extra Gangem*, or India on this side, and India beyond, the Ganges. The first part answers to the modern Hindoostan; the second to Burmah, Pegu, Siam, Laos, Cambodia, Cochin China, Tonquin, and Malacca. The derivation of the name India is uncertain. It may come either from the river Indus (which signifies the

* The accounts of this terrible event given by various ancient authors differ in several respects, though cohering as to the main incidents. In the preceding narrative, the account derived by Mr. Grote from a comparison of numerous authorities has been followed, as being apparently the most probable.

Blue or Black River), or from the people, called Indi, who inhabited the country. The term Indians was given by the Greeks alike to the southern nations of Africa, and to the people of the vast Asiatic peninsula with which we are now concerned. "Indian" and "Ethiop" were, indeed, regarded as convertible words, and Herodotus describes the Eastern Ethiops, or Indians, as differing from those of Africa by their long hair. Hindoostan, or the land of the Hindoos, is a name of Persian origin; but it was applied to the country at a very early period, though apparently devoid of any Sanskrit root. By native writers, India is called Bharutvursu, from a king named Bharut, who is said to have reigned over the whole country. The population of this great territory belonged for the most part to the Aryan family of mankind, and was therefore akin to the Persian and Median nationalities, and to the larger and best portion of the European stock. But in some quarters (especially in the south of the peninsula) a Turanian element prevailed, and still prevails—a survival of the aboriginal races subdued and dispossessed by the Brahminical conquerors of India, or true Hindoos, who entered the country from Central Asia, probably about the year 1200 B.C., if not earlier. The speech of these Hindoos was Sanskrit, a language which, in the opinion of modern philologists, has had a most important influence on the principal European tongues. No less important has been the influence of the Hindoo religion on subsequent theological developments, whether in Persia (as already related) or in other lands. But the mythologies of India will be more fitly treated at a later period.

At the time of Alexander the Great, India was inhabited by a variety of tribes and races, living under separate governments. Such is the account given by Herodotus, who apparently alludes to the Brahmins when he speaks of a people with whom it was unlawful to put any live animal to death, and who lived wholly on vegetables. The India of Herodotus is about the same as the modern Punjâb, where the Hindoos, advancing from Central Asia through Cabul, first entered the country with which they are now associated. The Greek geographer and historian, therefore, knew nothing as to the larger part of what we understand by India; and his account is very meagre and unsatisfactory.* It is probable that at a remote epoch the country was divided into four kingdoms, each rich and powerful in itself, and the whole forming a species of confederation under a predominant Emperor. *The most distinguished of the* four was the kingdom of Prachi, situated in the north-east, and comprehending the modern provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and part of Oude. The second of these states was the kingdom of Bejanagur, comprising the whole peninsula south of the Krishna. The third kingdom extended from the Gulf of Cambay to the mouths of the Ganges, and included the modern provinces of Gujerat, Malwah, Khandeish, Aurungabad, Berar, and Gundwana. In the north-west was the fourth kingdom, which seems to have corresponded with the provinces of Delhi, Lahore, Moultan, and Ajmeer. This last was the kingdom which Alexander attacked, and which, from its geographical situation, was better known to Western Asia than any of the others. Of the history of these four kingdoms, very little exists which can be relied on as authentic Obscurely looming through the mists of antiquity, we perceive a stately procession of incarnate deities, demi-gods, mythical heroes, warrior-kings, and mysterious priests, moving amongst temples and palm-trees in the hot spaces of a glowing realm; but we see little else. Hindoo writers attribute to their country an immense antiquity, extending over many thousands, or even millions, of years; but their statements, it need hardly be said, are regarded by European writers as of very little value. The capital of Prachi, called by the natives Balaputra, and by the Greeks Palibothra, is said by Diodorus Siculus to have been founded by the Indian Hercules; and it is added by the same author that the posterity of the demi-god reigned for centuries in that locality. Indeed, at every turn in the early annals of India we are met by fable, or by what has at least the appearance of mythological and poetic invention. The Greeks believed that Dionysus, or Bacchus, conducted an expedition into India, civilized the natives, taught them the cultivation of the vine, and established a golden age of universal justice and benevolence. The remote roots of the Greek religion may perhaps have been derived as much from India as from Egypt or Phœnicia; but this is a subject too speculative for discussion in the pages of history.

The veritable annals of primitive India are almost entirely confined to those of Cashmere. The chronicle of the kings of that country, entitled by the natives "Radjâ Taringini," was long known to Orientalists only through the medium of Persian translations; but, in the early years of the present century, four copies of the original were discovered, and they throw some light on distant events in the north-west of India. The first part of the work is thought to have been written about 1148 B.C., but subsequent divisions bring down the record to a

* Herodotus, Book III., chaps. 98—105.

much later period. We are here informed that the beautiful valley of Cashmere was originally a vast lake, which was at length drained by a holy man named Casyapa, grandson of Brahma, the divine founder of the religion called after his name. The territory thus redeemed was peopled with the assistance of certain gods whom Casyapa brought down from heaven. Then followed a series of fifty-two monarchs, whose reigns are alleged to have covered a period of 1,266 years. The fourth king from Casyapa was Pandou Khan, the ancestor of the Pandavas, whose early seat was in Cashmere, though they afterwards settled on the banks of the Hydaspes. Naureng Khan, the nineteenth of the Cashmirian kings, was a great conqueror, and is said to have extended his power as far as China. Nauder Khan, the twenty-seventh monarch, is reported to have introduced the worship of fire; and after his reign a period of disturbance ensued, which furnishes little of interest to the historian. We emerge once more into daylight in the age of Krishna, a monarch associated both with poetic legend and religious belief. Krishna did not reign in Cashmere, but in Mathura, where he seems to have been an usurper: he came into collision, however, with the people of the former kingdom, and inflicted on them some serious defeats. He was afterwards at war with Jara Sandha, king of Magadha, who besieged Mathura eighteen times, and eventually compelled Krishna to take refuge, with his family and partisans, in a strong position on the western side of the Indus. He then formed an alliance with the prince Pandava, and, entering Bahar by a circuitous route, surprised Jara Sandha in his capital, worsted him, and put him to death. The events of this period are very obscure; but it would seem that Krishna was expelled from Mathura, and founded a city on the coast of Malabar. He was at length slain in Saurashta by the aboriginal tribe of the Bheels, whom he had deprived of their territories: after his death, his descendants and adherents settled in other parts of India. Bala Rama, the brother of Krishna, is worshipped, conjointly with that semi-mythical hero, as one incarnation of the god Vishnu; but it is probable that he had a real historical existence. His posterity are said to have occupied the imperial throne of Palibothra for some generations; but nothing is known of them that possesses the character of certainty. They appear to have been a weak and incapable race; and, towards the latter end of the fourth century B.C., Maha Nanda, a warlike sovereign of Magadha, recovered from one of the successors of Bala Rama the conquests wrested

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from his ancestor, subdued the whole of Prachi, and re-established the seat of the Magadha Empire at Palibothra.

The invasions of Alexander were not always justified by even the allegation of any abstract right, which it was necessary to assert by the sword; but a sort of claim to the sovereignty of India was derived from some former relations between that country and the Persian Empire. Darius Hystaspes had pushed his conquests beyond the Indus, and was supposed to have thus established a right to the immense territories lying eastward of that river. Scylax, a Carian Greek in the naval service of Darius, descended the Indus from the city of Caspatyrus to the mouth of the stream; and after his return, the Great King overran a large part of Northern India, and exacted from its princes an annual tribute of three hundred talents of gold. That he established his power there is extremely doubtful; but, since it had once been asserted, Alexander considered that, as the representative of the Persian kings by virtue of his conquests, he was entitled to insist upon the tribute, and to demand that his supremacy should be acknowledged. At the period of the Macedonian invasion, Western India was partitioned among several warlike tribes. Arrian describes the inhabitants of the Punjâb as strongly-built, large-limbed, and taller than any other Asiatics. He refers to the swarthiness of their complexions, and speaks in high terms of their valour and capacity as soldiers. Even the Persians who fought under Cyrus were, he alleges, far inferior to the Indians; and the opposition encountered by Alexander showed that this character was not wholly undeserved.

It was in the summer of 327 B.C. that Alexander began his march from Bactra, where he left a force of 10,000 infantry and 3,500 cavalry under Amyntas, to keep the neighbouring country in subjection. Moving first in an easterly and then in a southerly direction, he reached the Paropamisus, or Hindoo-Koosh, the rugged heights of which he occupied ten days in crossing. Near the river Kophen (or Cabul), he was joined by a powerful Indian prince, who brought him a present of twenty-five elephants, and a reinforcement of 5,000 men. The name of this prince is given by the Greeks as Taxiles, from his capital, Taxila; but it seems to have been really Mophis or Omphis. He reigned in the Doab, or country between the Indus and the Hydaspes; but, although ruling over a martial race, he appears to have considered it advisable to make terms with Alexander before he entered his territory. The Macedonians and Greeks crossed the Indus by a bridge of boats near Taxila, the present Attock, where the river is not only very deep, but about a thousand feet broad. The invading army now amounted to 120,000 foot and 15,000 horse, a large number of whom were doubtless Asiatics. At the head of this array, Alexander marched through the dominions of Taxiles towards those of Porus—a name (if it be not rather a title of office) which is probably a corruption of the Sanskrit word *Paurusha*, signifying a hero. The kingdom of this monarch lay beyond the river Hydaspes (the Behut, or Jelum); and Porus, being a ruler of great spirit and courage, resolved to dispute the passage of the stream. By a skilfully contrived stratagem, Alexander managed to get his troops across the river without opposition; but a desperate battle then ensued. The army of Porus was numerous and well appointed, and the king himself—a man of gigantic stature and magnificent presence—directed the operations of his soldiers from the back of an immense elephant. His army included several of these animals, the sight and smell of which threw the horses of Alexander into an extreme panic. The Macedonians, nevertheless, were able to preserve their ranks unbroken, and ultimately succeeded in routing the Indians, who are said to have lost 12,000 killed, and 9,000 prisoners. The discomfiture of Porus was in fact partly due to his own elephants, which, being driven into a narrow space, created the utmost confusion by their unwieldly bulk and frantic movements. Two of the sons of Porus fell by his side; but the heroic monarch made repeated efforts to rally his flying troops, until himself disabled by wounds and intolerable thirst. He was then captured, and carried before Alexander, who asked him how he desired to be treated. "Like a king," he replied. "Have you no other request?" asked his adversary. "None," answered Porus; "everything is comprehended in the word *king*." The Macedonian sovereign was so struck by this reply that he allowed Porus to retain possession of his dominions, and even added to their extent.

On the banks of the Hydaspes, where Alexander rested for a month, he celebrated his victory by games and sacrifices, and also by the foundation of two cities, to one of which he gave the name of Nicæa, while the other was called Bucephala, in honour of his famous charger, which died of wounds and exhaustion immediately after the late battle. Resuming the campaign, Alexander passed through the whole of the Punjâb, encountering serious resistance from the Cathæans and other independent tribes, whose capital, Sangala,

has been conjecturally identified with the modern Lahore. This city was eventually stormed, when 17,000 of the inhabitants were slain, and 70,000 made prisoners. The territories of these martial tribes were divided amongst others who had at once submitted to the conqueror, and Alexander then advanced to the Hyphasis, or Sutlej, the last of the "Five Rivers" which give to the Punjâb its distinctive appellation. This stream marks the eastern limit of the Macedonian conquests. Worn out by fatigue and prolonged hardships, and alarmed, possibly, at the vast and unknown regions which lay before them, the troops broke into mutiny, and declared that they would go no farther. Alexander was especially annoyed at this manifestation of feeling, because he had been informed that a march of only eleven days would bring him to the river Ganges, and to the warlike nation inhabiting its banks. He used his utmost endeavours to change the purpose of his men; but they refused to cross the Hyphasis, and the conqueror had evidently no choice but to return. For two days he shut himself up in his tent, unable to bring his mind to the relinquishment of an enterprise which he believed would be among the most glorious of his achievements; then issuing forth, he offered the sacrifices usually made before the passage of a river, either hoping in this way to inspire his soldiers with a more resolute spirit, or seeking to find some excuse for abandoning his project. The victims were declared to be inauspicious, and Alexander immediately gave orders for the backward march. Previous to moving, however, he erected on the banks of the Hyphasis twelve colossal altars to mark the boundary of his Indian conquests, and celebrated games and sacrifices to the twelve great gods.

On regaining the banks of the Hydaspes, Alexander was met by reinforcements from Europe. This addition to his army was exceedingly welcome, since his recent losses in battle, by fatigue, and from the trying nature of the climate, had been very great, and his march through the Punjâb, having been performed during the summer rains, must have resulted in heavy casualties. He now divided his legions into three detachments, two of which, under the command of Hephæstion and Craterus, were ordered to descend the opposite banks of the Hydaspes, while he himself, with the third division, embarked on board a fleet of two thousand vessels, with the intention of sailing down the Indus to its mouth. Those were days of very imperfect geographical knowledge, especially as regarded distant lands; and Alexander was under the impression that the Indus was a branch of the Nile. The army set out in November, 327 B.C. The fleet, with Alexander on board, descended the Hydaspes in a south-westerly direction; but it was necessary to land the army several times, to quell the resistance of the natives. The most determined opposition was that of the Malli, with whom the invaders came into collision near the confluence of the Acesines with the Hydaspes. The town occupied by these people, which is thought to have been on the site of Moultan, was stormed by Alexander, who narrowly escaped with his life. Having mounted a scaling-ladder, he attained the summit of the wall, but, owing to the breaking of the ladder immediately afterwards, was left exposed to the fury of the enemy. He had the choice either of leaping down among his own men, or of casting himself into the citadel. Anything having the semblance of retreat was foreign to his nature, and he adopted the more hazardous alternative. Alighting on his feet, he set his back to the wall, slew two of the chiefs who came within the sweep of his sword, and kept the others at bay until struck down by an arrow which pierced through his corselet. Two of his officers, who had followed him, defended his person with their own bodies; but all would have been overwhelmed, had not a number of the soldiers scaled the ramparts in other parts, and opened the gates to their comrades. After a sanguinary fight, the citadel was captured, when every one within the place was killed. It was long before Alexander's life was out of danger; but on reaching the Indus he was once more able to take an active part in affairs, and at the junction of the streams ordered dockyards to be constructed, and another Alexandria to be built. He then continued his voyage to the Indian Ocean, but did not reach the mouth of the Indus until August, 326 B.C. Shortly afterwards he explored the estuaries of the river, and skirted the margin of the delta next the sea. His soldiers were astonished, and even alarmed, at the ebbing and flowing of the ocean tides, of which they had had no previous experience on anything like an equal scale.

It is a relief from the incessant record of battles and slaughter to find Alexander paying attention to questions of geographical science, from which the possibility of beneficent results to mankind might be expected. His fleet was under the command of an enterprising officer named Nearchus, and, after reaching the mouth of the Indus, Alexander directed his admiral to explore the Indian Ocean, the Persian Gulf, and the mouths of the Tigris and Euphrates, so that maritime communication might be established between India

and Persia. An account of this interesting and remarkable voyage was afterwards written by Nearchus himself, and, although the work has since been lost, its substance is apparently preserved by Arrian. The fleet took its departure from a station south of Patala at the beginning of October, 326 B.C. On reaching the ocean, Nearchus proceeded in a westerly and north-westerly direction along the coast, until, having reached the head of the Persian Gulf, in February, 325 B.C., he sailed up the river Pasitigris, and rejoined Alexander and his army on their march to Susa. He seems to have taken very minute observations of the countries along which he passed, and of the people who dwelt near the sea-shore. The narrative of his voyage is the earliest of which we have any knowledge, and many of the details, as repeated by Arrian, have been confirmed by modern explorers.

While Nearchus was performing this voyage, Alexander pursued his westward route by land. His way at first lay through the sandy deserts of Gedrosia, the modern Beloochistan. Here the sufferings of his troops were very great, owing to the fine dust which pervades the air, and penetrates the mouth and nostrils. The labour of marching through so vast a space of heavy sand was also enormous. The heat was terrible; and an insufficiency of water added to the misery of the soldiers. Alexander, however, shared the utmost hardships of his men, marching with them on foot, and allowing himself no privilege which they could not equally enjoy. It is related that one day, when some water was brought to him in a helmet, he poured it out upon the sand, rather than drink while others were suffering the torments of thirst: an anecdote which should be remembered in mitigation of the bad side of Alexander's character. The loss in men, horses, and baggage-cattle was enormous; but the army at length reached the city of Pura, where the men were allowed an interval of rest and refreshment. Thence they marched through Carmania, where the king conducted them in a Bacchanalian procession for seven days – an orgie of drunken joy, intended to be in emulation of the triumph of Dionysus on his return from India. While in Carmania, Alexander was for a time joined by Nearchus, whose vessels were then at Harmozia (Ormuz). The admiral was received with the greatest honour by his royal master, who could hardly believe that the fleet had arrived in safety at the entrance to the Persian Gulf. Being at length convinced that such was the fact, he exclaimed, "By the Grecian Zeus and the Libyan Ammon, I swear to you that I am more happy in receiving this intelligence than in being the conqueror of all Asia; for I should have considered the loss of my fleet, and the failure of the expedition, as a counterpoise to all the glory I have acquired." This must have been about the close of 326 B.C., and, after a brief stay on shore, Nearchus resumed his voyage to the head of the Persian Gulf. The main body of the army was then sent along the shores of the Gulf in a north-westerly direction, while the king, with the Companion-cavalry and the light infantry, made his way through Pasargadæ and Persepolis to Susa. During a brief halt at Persepolis, he punished certain satraps who had oppressed the people under their government, and in this way established a reputation for justice which his own acts did not always warrant.

At Susa, where similar penalties were inflicted upon others who had equally abused their power, the army was entertained by a series of gorgeous festivities, and Alexander, who had now adopted the full ceremonial of the Persian court, contracted marriages with Statira, the daughter of the last Darius, and with Parysatis, the daughter of Ochus. It was a portion of the vast and ambitious schemes of Alexander to establish an universal empire, and to fuse all the nations of the world into one compound race. He was therefore particularly desirous of effecting the union of Greeks and Macedonians with Persians and other Orientals. Large numbers of the soldiers were induced by rewards to take Asiatic wives, and the king omitted no means by which he could break down, or largely qualify, both the Macedonian and Greek nationalities. Since the refusal of his troops to pass the Hyphasis, Alexander had begun to distrust the forces which he had so often led on to victory. He therefore levied Asiatic soldiers in various parts of his immense empire, trained them after the Macedonian fashion, and placed them on the footing of veterans. Several of the older soldiers were dismissed, as being no longer fit for service, and although this dismissal was accompanied by liberal presents, it created a feeling of general dissatisfaction among the Europeans. A mutiny broke out on the Tigris, and, while Alexander was addressing the malcontents, they cried out that he had better dismiss them all, and trust to his father Ammon to fight his battles. The king immediately ordered thirteen of the malcontents to be seized and executed; then, addressing the others in terms of bitter reproach, he gave a discharge to all, and commanded them to depart forthwith. His Macedonian guard was exchanged for a Persian one, and he secluded himself for two days. On the third day, the mutineers sub-

mitted themselves to his mercy, and were pardoned. Solemn sacrifices were followed by a grand banquet, when the Grecian prophets united with the Persian Magi in prayer and libation for the perfect community of the two races. Ten thousand veterans were selected for dismissal to their homes under the conduct of Craterus; and Antipater, who had been administering the affairs of Macedonia during the absence of Alexander, was ordered to Asia with fresh reinforcements for the royal army. These arrangements, however, were interrupted by the premature death of the conqueror.

From Susa, Alexander proceeded to Ecbatana, where, during the autumn of 325 B.C., he solemnized the festival of Dionysus with more than usual splendour. It is related that 3,000 of the best actors and musicians were brought from Greece, and the old Median capital was crowded with visitors, to witness so unwonted a display. Banquets and profuse drinking, according to the Macedonian custom, characterized these festivals to the god of wine; and before they had reached their termination, Hephæstion, the special favourite of Alexander, contracted a fever, of which he died. The king was sitting in the theatre when intelligence was brought him that Hephæstion was sinking. He hurried to the bedside, and found that his friend had already expired. The grief of Alexander was characterized by all that wild extravagance, culminating in a sort of maniacal fury, which so often carried him away. After wailing over the dead body for several hours, and refusing food until he was nearly exhausted, he ordered that all the horses and mules in camp should have their manes cut close in token of mourning. Every sign of joy was interdicted, and it was decreed that the battlements of the neighbouring cities should be struck down. The physician who had been in attendance on Hephæstion was hung or crucified, and a vast funeral pile was commenced at Babylon. The name of Hephæstion was still retained as commander of one of the cavalry divisions, while the officer who actually discharged the duties enjoyed simply the rank of his lieutenant. In 324 B.C., Alexander diverted his grief by an expedition against the Cossæi, a border tribe between Media and Persia. The Cossæi were hardy warriors; but Alexander drove them into the recesses of their mountains, and finally exterminated nearly the whole male population, as an offering to the spirit of Hephæstion. The temper of the king had become so ferocious that no one approached him without fear; and this latter portion of his life must have been regarded by pious Greeks as testifying to the operations of that terrible Nemesis which maddens those who would place themselves upon a level with the gods. The sunset of his stormy career was now close at hand, and the light of the descending orb shone with an intense yet baleful splendour as it neared the horizon beneath which it was so soon to fall.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE DIVISION OF THE EMPIRE.

Deputations to Alexander from various Parts of the World—The Conqueror Enters Babylon—Fresh Schemes of Dominion—Expedition into the Chaldæan Marshes—The Obsequies of Hephæstion—Last Illness and Death of Alexander—His General Character and Influence—Affairs in Greece—Persecution and Exile of Demosthenes—Athenian Movement against the Power of Macedon—The Lamian War—Severe Treatment of the Athenians by Antipater—Self-inflicted Death of Demosthenes—Division of Alexander's Empire among his Generals—Funeral of Alexander—Ambition of Perdiccas—His War with Ptolemy in Egypt, and Death—The Treaty of Triparadisus for a fresh Division of the Empire—War between Eumenes and Antigonus—Death of Antipater—Outbreak of War between Polysperchon and Cassander—Condemnation and Death of Phocion—Predominance of Cassander in Greece—Invasion of Macedon from Epirus—Death of Olympias—Restoration of Thebes—Coalition against Antigonus—General Pacification—Murder of Roxana and her Son by Cassander—Hostilities between Ptolemy and Antigonus—Demetrius Poliorcetes at Athens—Adulation of the Athenians on receiving a Promise of Freedom—Brilliant Successes of Demetrius Poliorcetes in Cyprus—Defeat of Ptolemy in a Naval Action—Unsuccessful Siege of Rhodes by Demetrius—Return of Demetrius to Athens—Sycophancy of the People—Defeat and Death of Antigonus at the Battle of Ipsus—Foundation of Antioch by Seleucus Nicator.

When, in the early part of 323 B.C., Alexander proceeded from Ecbatana to Babylon—from the Median to the Chaldæan capital—he received some remarkable evidences of the extent to which his fame had spread among the nations. At various points on the road he was met by embassies from distant parts, tendering friendship and alliance; and it would appear from the accounts of ancient

authors that these embassies came from nearly all the countries then known, excepting, of course, those which Alexander had already subjected by his sword. It is even said that Carthage and Rome sent deputations to the great conqueror; while Ethiopians from the south of Africa, Scythians from the north of Europe and Asia, and Iberians and Gauls from the extreme west, showed that the martial exploits of the Macedonian hero had penetrated to the ends of the earth. The Grecian legates presented him with golden wreaths, and all vied with one another in doing honour to the man who had shown himself stronger than the mighty Persian Empire which Cyrus the Great had founded. Under these intoxicating influences, Alexander approached Babylon; but, shortly after crossing the Tigris, the Chaldæan priests warned him that to enter the city would be dangerous. He was recommended to remain outside the walls; but, probably considering that to accept this advice would seem cowardly, he passed the gates, and took up his abode in the palace. Nearchus and the fleet had shortly before arrived, and with that commander he concerted a plan for combined military and naval operations in Arabia and the Persian Gulf. The Arabians were to be conquered, and their shores circumnavigated; and a maritime city was to be established on the Persian Gulf, for the development of commerce in that region.

Having made these arrangements, and ordered a fleet to be constructed for the exploration of the Caspian, Alexander started on an expedition down the canal Pallacopas—a vast dyke or sluice, constructed by the old Chaldæan kings for the purpose of draining the Euphrates into the adjacent marshes when the channel was too full. It had been reported to the Macedonian sovereign that the sluice did not sufficiently answer the intention of its designers, and he therefore proposed to make a new one at a more favourable point. He did not quit this desolate spot without sailing through the immense swamps and marshes which spread westward from the canal, and where, amidst a melancholy waste of land and water, of reeds and willows, of winding lagunes and heavy overgrowth, the monarchs of an earlier day had built their tombs. The intricacies of these watery avenues were so great that the fleet lost its way among them; but Alexander was not to be deterred from his exploration, and, crowned with the regal diadem, he steered the principal vessel with his own hands. A new city was commenced by him in this part of ancient Babylonia, and then, returning to the capital, he inaugurated a reform of his military organization, with a view to the more complete union of the European and Persian elements. Next he reviewed the fleet, a portion of which had been recently built in Phœnicia and Cyprus, carried in pieces to Thapsacus, there put together, and floated down the Euphrates to Babylon, where gigantic docks were being constructed for the reception of large ships. Alexander, as we have seen, cherished the idea of an empire that was to embrace the whole world; and of this empire Babylon was to be at once the metropolis and the chief naval arsenal.

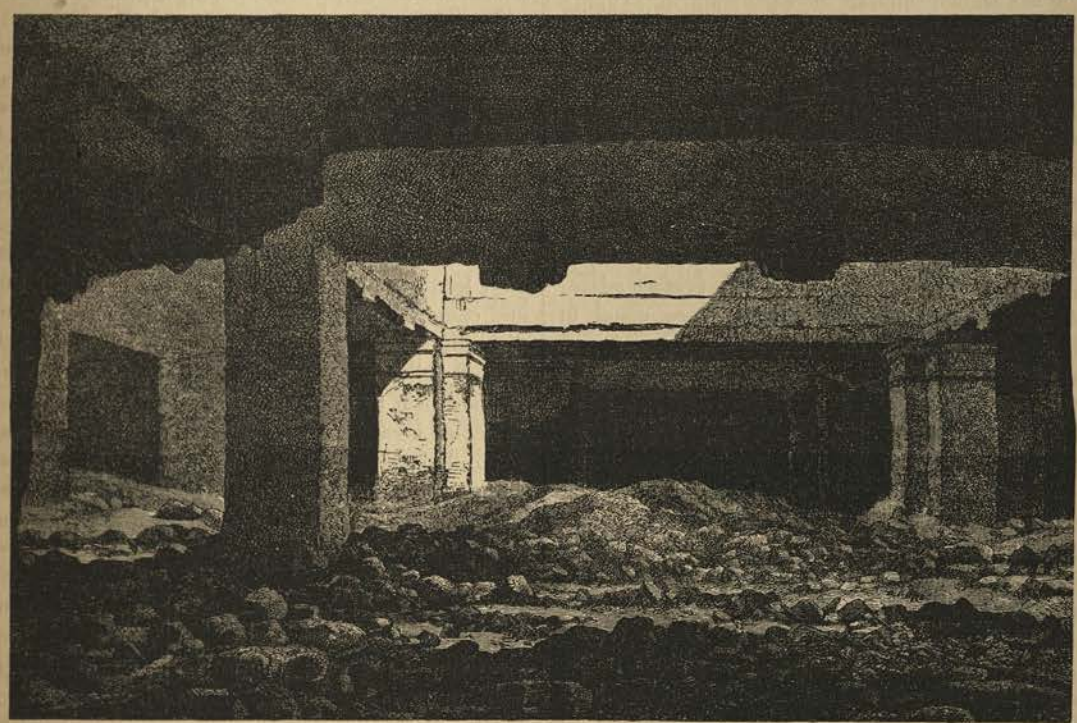
The next grand project was to be the conquest of Arabia; but, before departing for the south, the king celebrated the obsequies of Hephæstion on a scale of unparalleled grandeur. The funeral pyre was two hundred feet high, and the length of each of the four sides was nearly a furlong. The decorations of this enormous pile were of the most costly magnificence, and it is said (though the statement is scarcely credible) that the total outlay reached the prodigious sum of 12,000 talents, equal to £2,760,000 of modern English money. This, however, may perhaps have included the ensuing festivals;* but in any case the expenditure was extraordinary. Immediately after the death of his friend, Alexander sent messengers to the oracle of Jupiter Ammon, to inquire what degree of reverence might be paid to the soul of the deceased. The answer was to the effect that Hephæstion was to be honoured as a Hero, in what we now regard as the mythical sense of that term—a very exalted dignity, but of course implying a degree of worship inferior to that of the gods. The lighting of the pile was followed by solemn and impressive ceremonies, and orders were given for the erection of memorial chapels to Hephæstion in various cities of the empire.

It was not without gloomy forebodings that Alexander had entered Babylon on his return from Ecbatana, for, as we have said, the Chaldæan soothsayers had warned him of evil consequences if he did so. Omens of a threatening character had gathered about him, and the death of Hephæstion depressed his mind with a permanent sorrow, which neither enterprise nor debauchery enabled him to shake off. Had he possessed the gift of seeing future events whose shadow was already upon him, he might have beheld in the obsequies of his friend the celebration of his own. His somewhat prolonged stay among the marshes to the west of Babylon seems to have infected his blood with the germs of fever, and the irregularity of his life tended to develope any mischief that might have been latent in his system. After the burning of

* Grote.

the funeral pile, Alexander presided at a banquet to the whole army, and drank deeply, according to his wont. He then supped with his favourite, Medius, and spent the night in revelry. The following night was devoted to similar excesses, and next morning the king was unable to quit the house of Medius, or even to rise from his couch. Stories were related in the ancient world, pointing to the conclusion that he was poisoned; and it was said that the poison was provided by Aristotle (whom Alexander, in his later years, had come to hate), that it was despatched to Asia by Antipater, who employed his son Cassander in the office, and that the draught was administered by the king's cup-bearer, Iollas, another son of Antipater. But, although this story may not be in itself improbable, so far as the main result is concerned (since Alexander had undoubtedly several jealous enemies), it is not sufficiently supported by unimpeachable evidence to be accepted as conclusive; and the known facts, with regard to the sojourn in the marshes and the subsequent debauch, seem abundantly to explain the catastrophe.

For nine days, Alexander fought with the growing fever; rising each day to bathe and offer sacrifice; at other times arranging affairs of state, talking with his officers about the projected expedition, or playing dice with Medius. But two days before his death he seems to have given up hope, and, being carried across to the palace, he ordered that his generals should remain in permanent attendance. Seeing that the end was near, one of the generals asked him to whom he bequeathed the kingdom. He answered, "To the strongest;" and after that spoke no more. But, a little before his decease, he took the signet-ring from his finger, and handed it to Perdiccas, as if by that action suggesting that he regarded *him* as the fittest successor to the royal dignity. The news of his illness having by this time spread throughout the army, large numbers of the soldiers forced their way into the palace, and were allowed, after first giving up their weapons, to pass by the death-bed of their monarch. As they trooped solemnly before his eyes, Alexander stretched out his hand in recognition; but he was now beyond the power of speech. Some of the generals, thinking the case one for supernatural direction, slept in the temple of Serapis, that they might ascertain, through the medium of a dream, whether or not the king should be brought into the sacred edifice as a suppliant for divine assistance. But the reply which the god was supposed to have given amounted to an intimation that Alexander should be left where he was; and so the sands ran



CATACOMBS IN ALEXANDRIA.

out, and on the afternoon of June 28th, 323 B.C., the conqueror of Asia passed away in the full meridian of his days, having lived something less than thirty-three years, and reigned not more than twelve years and eight months.

The character of Alexander the Great cannot be portrayed by any of the stock phrases either of adulation or reproof. He was a man of a mixed nature, whose impulses were sometimes generous and noble, but who could not be relied on for common justice where his passions stood in the way. Despotic by birth and breeding, he rapidly acquired, in the congenial atmosphere of the East, both the disposition and the manners of an Asiatic sovereign. Yet his Hellenic ancestry and education were never forgotten, and in all his enterprises one sees the predominance of an intellect which had Europe for its parent. No such soldier had appeared before, because no great captain (so far, at least, as our information goes) had ever exhibited so methodical and scientific a spirit in the operations of war. His vigilance, endless resource, and perfect adaptability to changing circumstances, were equal to his courage, and gave him the true character of a commander, as distinguished from the mere chieftain. He was undoubtedly the greatest man of action in the ancient world, and it may perhaps be doubted whether any one has equalled him in the totality of his genius and achievements. If the conquest of the whole earth was ever possible to any one, Alexander was the leader most fitted to effect it, and he would certainly have made the attempt, to the utmost limits of existing knowledge, had he lived. But he was not only a conqueror; he had also the constructive genius which shows itself in the founding of cities, the navigation of unknown waters, and the opening of new fields of commerce. Having regard simply to the violence of Alexander's career, his indifference to the rights of others, his frequent cruelties, and the rivers of blood which he spilt, one might say that here indeed was a curse to the world. But we must also consider the good which resulted from that mingling of the East and the West which was commenced by his sword. A large part of Asia was to some extent Hellenised by him and his successors, and the world became more conscious of its unity from that time. The gigantic proportions of Alexander are acknowledged as much by Asiatics as by Europeans. Iskander is to this day one of the great legendary heroes of the Turks, the Persians, the Afghans, and the people of the central deserts.

The death of Alexander offers us an opportunity of reverting to the affairs of Greece, from which the marvellous tale of conquest has withdrawn our attention. The Spartans under Agis endeavoured to shake off the Macedonian predominance, but were defeated, with the death of their monarch, by Antipater, in 331 B.C. The supporters of Alexander and of the regent then became more bold and confident in their acts, and it was determined to take measures against Demosthenes as the chief upholder of the anti-Macedonian party. The first effect of this resolve was seen in the celebrated oration of Æschines against Ctesiphon for having proposed, after the battle of Chæronea, that Demosthenes should be presented with a golden crown, in recognition of his services; to which oration Demosthenes replied in the no less famous speech "On the Crown." The case was decided in 330 B.C., and Æschines, having failed to obtain a fifth part of the votes, retired to Rhodes, to avoid paying the penalty to which he had rendered himself liable. An opportunity for another attack on Demosthenes occurred five years later, in 325 B.C., when Harpalus, Alexander's representative at Ecbatana, fled from that city, lest he should be punished for his oppressions, and came to Athens. The Athenians were at first disinclined to receive him; but a liberal distribution of bribes among some of the principal orators enabled him to obtain a refuge. This was clearly an act of hostility against Macedon, and Antipater demanded that Harpalus should be given up, and that those who had accepted bribes should be brought to trial. Harpalus made his escape, and Demosthenes, having been found guilty in 324 B.C., was condemned to a fine of fifty talents. Being unable to pay that sum, he was thrown into prison, but, managing to get free, lived for a while in exile, sometimes in Ægina, and sometimes in Trœzen.

The death of Alexander was in the following year, and the news of that important event incited the Athenians to take measures for the recovery of their independence. It was determined that a fleet of two hundred and forty triremes should be equipped; that all citizens under forty years of age should enrol themselves for service; and that an army of mercenaries should at once be levied. The other Grecian States were invited to join, but the more important held aloof from an enterprise which offered small prospects of success. Even the Athenians were not unanimous in its favour, and Phocion, in particular, was opposed to the war. But the general feeling in Attica was apparently well disposed to the attempt, and the allied army, under the general command of the Athenian Leosthenes, assembled in the neighbourhood of Thermopylæ with many hopeful anticipations. Antipater, in passing from the north, offered battle to the enemy in the vale of the Spercheus, but was obliged to retreat,

owing to the desertion of his Thessalian cavalry. He took refuge in Lamia, a fortress on the Malian Gulf, where he was blockaded by Leosthenes, after a vain attempt to take the position by assault. The campaign has been termed the Lamian War, after the name of this town. The Athenians were not unnaturally elated at their success over so distinguished a general as Antipater; but Phocion, whose nature was never hopeful, and who was now overshadowed by the sad experiences of age, could only remark, "The short race has been run splendidly; but I fear we shall not have strength to hold out for the long course." Demosthenes, who was as sanguine as he had been in earlier years, went to the Peloponnesus, and employed all his arts of persuasion and oratory to obtain further allies, but without much effect. His countrymen then recalled him to Athens, and, on arriving there, he was received with the extraordinary honours due to his genius and his fame.

The gloomy misgivings of Phocion were speedily realised. Leosthenes was killed by a stone hurled from a catapult towards the latter end of 323 B.C. Great delay took place before his successor was appointed, and the conduct of the war became less energetic from that date. Nevertheless, the allies achieved a temporary success over Leonnatus, governor of the Hellespontine Phrygia, who, at the head of 20,000 foot and 2,500 horse, approached Lamia in the hope of raising the siege. Before he could reach the spot, he was suddenly attacked by Antiphilus, the new Athenian commander, by whom he was defeated and killed on one of the plains of Thessaly. But the departure of the allies from before Lamia left Antipater free to sally forth, and, joining the discomfited army of Leonnatus on the following day, he was enabled to assume a position of active hostility which was not long in producing its effects. He was soon afterwards reinforced by the arrival of Craterus with a considerable army from Asia; and the allies were attacked near Crannon, in Thessaly, on the 7th of August, 322 B.C. Their defeat was of the most crushing nature, and nothing remained but to sue for peace. Antipater would treat with the different members of the League only as separate States, thus depriving them of all mutual support. All submitted to the conqueror, and Antipater advanced towards Athens with the evident intention of taking revenge upon a city which had always been foremost in opposition to Macedon.

Phocion did his utmost to mitigate the anger of the regent; but the terms imposed by the latter were unrelenting in their severity. He required that the Athenians should deliver up a certain number of their orators, of course including Demosthenes; that their political franchise should be limited by a property qualification; that they should receive a Macedonian garrison in Munychia; and that they should defray the expenses of the war. He also established oligarchies, formed out of Macedonian partisans, in the chief cities of Greece; transported a large number of free citizens into foreign lands; and, entering Peloponnesus, reduced it to submission. Demades, one of the Macedonian partisans, moved a decree for the arrest of the Athenian orators, who had taken to flight; and Athenian officers were sent with the envoys of Antipater to pursue them. Hyperides, who had led the anti-Macedonian party during the former exile of Demosthenes, sought refuge in the temple of Demeter at Hermione, in the Peloponnesus. Demosthenes himself entered the temple of Poseidon, in the small island of Calaurea, near Trœzen. From the first of these fanes, Hyperides was dragged out, carried back to Athens, and put to death; and it is said that, while he was yet alive, Antipater caused his tongue to be cut out, and thrown to the dogs. Demosthenes was confronted in his sanctuary by a number of armed men, who bade him come forth. While parleying with these envoys, and pretending to write down some last directions to his family, he bit the end of his reed, which contained poison, and then professed his readiness to leave the temple. But even while expressing his gratitude to Poseidon that he had not polluted the holy place with his death, he fell down by the altar, and expired. The decease of this wonderful orator, whose influence on his country, notwithstanding his extraordinary powers, cannot be regarded as happy, is stated to have occurred on the 14th of October, 322 B.C. The same year is also rendered memorable by the death of Aristotle, who, together with Plato, has exercised a greater influence over philosophical thought than any other teachers of the ancient world.

Although the efforts of the Athenians had been fruitful in nothing but disaster, it was evident that the Macedonian supremacy was imperilled by the death of Alexander, to the immediate results of which we must now revert. The great conqueror had left no legitimate heir to the throne, though a child by his wife Roxana was expected. There was consequently no obvious centre of authority, round which the enormous empire of the great soldier could gather. Everything was in the hands of the generals, who disagreed as to the proper course to be pursued. The cavalry and infantry were at issue with one another, and it required the utmost skill of Perdiccas to compose

their quarrels. At length, however, before the close of 323 B.C., an arrangement was concluded, which contained many germs of future discord, but which, perhaps, was the only one possible under the circumstances. Philip Aridæus, the half-brother of Alexander, and a young man of weak intellect, was to be declared king, though on the understanding that the child of Roxana, if a son, should share the sovereignty. The government of Macedonia and Greece was to be divided between Antipater and Craterus. To Ptolemy, the son of Lagus, were assigned Egypt and the adjacent countries. Antigonus was to receive Phrygia Proper, Lycia, and Pamphylia. The Hellespontine Phrygia was given to Leonnatus, who, as we have seen, was killed shortly afterwards in the Lamian war. Eumenes received the satrapy of Paphlagonia and Cappadocia—a barren acquisition, as those countries had yet to be subdued. Thrace was made over to Lysimachus, a Sicilian Greek of low birth, but remarkable courage, while Perdiccas reserved for himself the eastern part of the empire, together with the command of the Companion-cavalry, vacant by the death of Hephæstion, and which conferred on Perdiccas the guardianship of Philip Aridæus, the monarch in name, but in little else. Antipater, as viceroy of Macedonia, was at first disposed to lay claim to the entire empire; but the difficulties of the Lamian war prevented his taking any steps in that direction. Olympias would probably have asserted her own rights but for the fear of Antipater, who had always been her enemy. She therefore fled into Epirus, but it was not long before her domineering and restless spirit made itself felt in Macedonia. In the general distribution of the empire, no mention was made of Seleucus Nicator; but this commander afterwards succeeded in obtaining some of the most important parts of the Alexandrine dominions.

The funeral of Alexander did not take place until a considerable time after the settlement of these details. It was of course conducted on a scale of the most lavish and overpowering splendour. The funeral car was adorned with ornaments of massive gold, and was of such extraordinary weight that it took eighty-four mules more than a year in conveying it from Babylon to Syria. Its place of destination was Alexandria, and here the body of the great conqueror was deposited in a mausoleum which afterwards became the sepulchre of the Ptolemies. A sarcophagus in the British Museum was formerly supposed to be that of Alexander, but is now, by an interpretation of the writings on it, associated with Nectanebo I. of Egypt. Before the celebration of the funeral, Roxana had been delivered of a son, who was named after his father, and declared the partner of Aridæus in the sovereignty. That his claim should not be disputed by any half-brother, or other probable claimant, Roxana had previously assassinated the rival queen, Statira, and her sister Drypetis, the widow of Hephæstion. It must be recollected that Roxana was an Oriental, and that in so acting she only followed an atrocious precedent which had frequently been set by Persian kings. The custody of the infant Alexander rested with Perdiccas, who was practically, though perhaps not nominally, the regent of the whole empire. His wife was a daughter of Antipater, whose alliance he seemed at first desirous of obtaining. This, however, did not last long, for Olympias offered Perdiccas the hand of her daughter Cleopatra, if he would help her against Antipater. The temptation was too great to be resisted, since the marriage would establish a connection between Perdiccas and the royal family of Macedon, and Perdiccas would be content with nothing but the chief place. He had already acquired great military reputation by assistance rendered to Eumenes in the conquest of Cappadocia; and he now attempted to bring Antigonus to trial for some alleged offence in the government of his province. Fearful of the result, Antigonus fled to Macedon, where he informed Antipater that Perdiccas was secretly acting against him.

Antipater saw that he must take active measures to guard his power, and perhaps even his life: he therefore entered into an alliance with Antigonus, Craterus, and Ptolemy, for the purpose of carrying on war against their common foe. Perdiccas had the support of Eumenes, who is regarded as the most prudent of the Diadochi, or successors of Alexander, and who hoped to become master of all Asia Minor by adding to his own the governments of Leonnatus, killed in the Lamian war, and of Antigonus, who had deserted his province. Eumenes was a Greek of Cardia in the Thracian Chersonese, and, having acted as the secretary of Alexander, had of late enjoyed much of his confidence. He was a soldier of great skill and resolution, and, while he kept at bay the attacks of Antigonus and Craterus, Perdiccas considered himself free to assail Ptolemy in Egypt. In the spring of 321 B.C., Perdiccas set out with a large army for the invasion of the African kingdom, and, having advanced without opposition as far as Pelusium, found Ptolemy awaiting attack in an entrenched camp beyond the Nile. Several attempts were made to force the passage of the river; but all were repulsed, and in the last, which was near Memphis, great numbers of men were carried

away by the rapidity of the current. The soldiers were so utterly disheartened that they mutinied against Perdiccas, who had never been a favourite, and murdered him in the camp. Antipater was at this time acting with Ptolemy, and he now obtained possession of Roxana and her infant son, of Philip Aridæus, and of his wife, Eurydice, all of whom had accompanied Perdiccas to the war.

The allied generals afterwards met at Triparadisus, in Syria, where, in 321 B.C., a new partition of the provinces was effected. Antipater still kept Macedonia and Greece; Ptolemy remained at the head of Egypt; Antigonus received Susiana in addition to his former provinces; and Seleucus, as satrap of Babylon, acquired some of the territories which had formerly been administered by Perdiccas. A vote of the Macedonian army declared Eumenes an outlaw, and Antigonus was then appointed to conduct operations against him. Eumenes was by this time deserted by Alcetas, the brother of Perdiccas (who had previously rendered him great assistance), and was exposed to considerable difficulties owing to the jealousy of his Macedonian officers. Nevertheless, he had defeated his enemies in a decisive battle, in which Craterus was slain, when the arrival of Antigonus with his forces confronted him with so overwhelming an array that he was no longer able to maintain the open field. He therefore retired into the fortress of Nora, in Cappadocia, where Antigonus subjected him to a long blockade, from which he at length managed to free himself by escaping to the upper provinces in 319 B.C. The same year was rendered conspicuous by the slaying of the orator Demades, who, though he had previously acted as a Macedonian partisan, was found to have intrigued with Perdiccas against Antipater, and who was therefore put to death by Cassander, the son of the latter. In the following year Antipater died in Macedonia, at the age of eighty, leaving the regency to the Epirote, Polysperchon, one of Alexander's oldest generals. This arrangement excluded Antipater's son, Cassander, who had numerous adherents among the oligarchies of the Greek cities. Cassander would not allow his claims to be thus passed over, and accordingly took the field with a numerous army. Polysperchon, acting in the name of Olympias, who was now at Pella, encountered this movement by proclaiming the Grecian States free and independent, and by abolishing the oligarchies that had been set up by Antipater. His son Alexander was despatched with an army to Athens, to compel the Macedonian garrison under the command of Nicanor to evacuate Munychia; but Nicanor refused to obey.

These events brought on the death of Phocion. That statesman, who was still at the head of affairs, had always been in favour of the Macedonian alliance; but it was now suspected that he was intriguing both with Cassander and with Polysperchon to obtain protection against the returning exiles, who certainly, on their arrival, exhibited the most vindictive feeling against Phocion. Being accused of treason, he fled to Alexander, Polysperchon's son, to refute the charges brought against him. Alexander sent him on to his father, by whom a preliminary investigation was conducted; but he was ultimately sent back to Athens in chains, to be tried by the popular tribunal. So much rancour was exhibited by his enemies, who had been exasperated against him either by his honesty, or by the views he entertained, that his defence was scarcely heard, and in the end he was sentenced to death by a show of hands. On being conducted back to prison, amidst the lamentations of his friends and the savage cries of his antagonists, a man in the crowd spat on him; but he bore all such indignities with the quiet and lofty spirit he had shewn throughout the whole of his public life. To the question whether he had any message to leave for his son Phocus, he answered, "Only that he bear no malice against the Athenians:" a reply in the highest spirit of patriotism and charity. He died in 317 B.C., at the age of eighty-five; and the Athenians, who in the first instance cast out his bones on the frontiers of Megara, subsequently erected a bronze statue to his memory.

While these events were proceeding, Cassander arrived in the Piræus with a large army. Here he was attacked by Polysperchon, who, finding himself unable to reduce the fortifications, retired into the Peloponnesus, where he was equally unsuccessful in an attack on Megalopolis. Such repeated misfortunes produced a feeling of opposition to Polysperchon throughout the Greek States; and Cassander, who had already secured the adhesion of Athens, where he restored the oligarchical government under the direction of Demetrius of Phalerum, an orator, philosopher, and poet, now utterly destroyed the fleet of his rival, and established his own superiority in Greece. In Macedonia also, the predominance of Polysperchon encountered serious opposition. Eurydice, the wife of Philip Aridæus, determined on throwing off the yoke imposed on her weak-minded husband by the regent, and with this view concluded an alliance with Cassander. For a time she appeared to be successful; but when Polysperchon had effected an alliance with Æacides, King of Epirus, he was enabled to invade Macedonia with an overwhelming force. Eurydice

went out to meet the enemy, but was deserted by her troops when they recognized in the advancing ranks of their adversaries the extraordinary figure of Olympias surrounded by a Bacchanalian train. Finding herself incapable of further resistance, Eurydice fled to Amphipolis, but was soon afterwards taken by Olympias, who put her and her husband to death, with all those elaborations of cruelty which seemed proper to her frantic and savage nature. These acts of vengeance were followed by similar atrocities committed on the family of Antipater, and on the adherents of Cassander. But the success of Olympias was short-lived. It was evident to Cassander that he must make a vigorous effort to re-establish his power in Macedonia, or consent to see it hopelessly destroyed. He therefore marched northwards in all haste, and Olympias threw herself into Pydna, together with Roxana and her young son. The city was blockaded by Cassander, and surrendered in the spring of 316 B.C. Although Olympias had stipulated for her life, the conqueror, on entering the city, gave directions that she should be killed. Two hundred soldiers were sent to carry these orders into execution, but were deterred by the grandeur of this majestic but diabolical woman; and she was at length slain by those of her enemies whose children she had put to death. All Macedon submitted to Cassander, who, in order to consolidate his power, confined Roxana and her son in the citadel of Amphipolis, and married Thessalonica, a half-sister of Alexander the Great.

Polysperchon, who was now old and wanting in energy, retired into Ætolia on finding his rival Cassander so firmly established in the Macedonian sovereignty. Alexander, the son of Polysperchon, was at this time in the Peloponnesus, where he seemed well able to maintain himself; but it was not long before Cassander marched against him. On his way towards the south, the Macedonian ruler rebuilt Thebes, which, twenty years before, had been destroyed by Alexander the Great, after the desperate attempt of its citizens to throw off their alien yoke. The later Alexander now invited back from the cities of Greece, Sicily, and Italy, those of the Theban exiles who still survived. This restoration took place in 315 B.C., and was not only an act of manifest justice, but a stroke of policy, as the measure was naturally very popular throughout the whole of Hellas. The Athenians, Megalopolitans, and Messenians, did more than any other community in forwarding the work; but the citizens of all the States were impressed with the propriety of re-establishing the city of Epaminondas. Two years before this event, the Spartans had for the first time surrounded their capital with walls—a precaution which appears to have been suggested by Cassander's invasion of the Peloponnesus, the results of which warned the people of Lacedæmon that, without due protection, the fate of Thebes might some day be their own.

Antigonus, one of the ablest of Alexander's generals, and the most powerful of the military chieftains amongst whom the empire was divided, had by this time, in combination with his allies, conquered Eumenes (who, after exhibiting the most brilliant capacity as a soldier in a series of campaigns extending over two years, was betrayed and put to death), and had raised himself to a position of superiority which moved the jealousy of others. A coalition, consisting of Ptolemy, Seleucus, Cassander, and Lysimachus, was formed against him, and war broke out in 315 B.C. Numerous battles were fought in Syria, Phœnicia, Asia Minor, and Greece, but a general pacification was agreed upon in 311 B.C., of which the main conditions were, that the Greek cities should be free; that Cassander should retain his authority in Europe until the youthful son of Alexander the Great should come of age; that Ptolemy should keep possession of Egypt, and Lysimachus of Thrace; and that to Antigonus should be assigned the government of all Asia. Seleucus, to whom had been given the satrapy of Babylon by the settlement of Triparadisus ten years before, is not mentioned in the later treaty, though in after years he occupied a very important position in the vast but ill-compacted dominions of Alexander. The peace of 311 B.C. did not last long; but during the brief period of repose an act of great atrocity was committed by Cassander, who, dreading the termination of his power, ordered the secret murder of Roxana, and her son Alexander, the latter of whom was then about twelve years of age. The mother and her child were still shut up in the citadel of Amphipolis when this abominable crime was consummated; and it is believed that their end was hastened by the zeal of partisans, who had been demanding their release with a view to placing the boy upon the throne of his father. But the age was one of treachery and cruel violence. Hercules, an illegitimate son of Alexander the Great, was murdered, together with his mother, by Polysperchon, who had previously proclaimed him king, but who was bribed by Cassander to commit the deed. This was in 309 B.C.; and, about the same time, the last surviving relative of Alexander, his sister Cleopatra, was secretly killed by Antigonus, at Sardis.

Hostilities broke out again in 310 B.C., when

Ptolemy, coming forward as the assertor of Hellenic independence, charged Antigonus with keeping his garrisons in the Greek cities of Asia Minor and of the islands, in defiance of that article of the recent treaty which guaranteed Greek freedom. The war had lasted three years when Antigonus determined to make himself predominant in Greece, the principal towns of which were at that time held by the forces of Cassander and Ptolemy. He therefore despatched his son Demetrius from Ephesus to Athens, with a fleet of two hundred and fifty vessels, and a large treasure. Demetrius afterwards attained great distinction as a soldier, and, from the number of walled towns which he reduced, obtained the surname of Poliorcetes, or "Besieger of Cities." In 307 B.C., he was still a very young man; but his abilities as a soldier had even then been exhibited on more than one occasion. Arriving at the Piræus with all speed, he charmed the Athenians by the announcement that his object was to free their city from the despotism of its Macedonian garrison. Athens had at that time been for several years under the rule of Demetrius the Phalerean—a man of humble birth, but of singular and varied ability. Notwithstanding his Attic nationality, this man acted as a servant of the Macedonians, and was therefore extremely unpopular with all Athenians who held the views of Demosthenes rather than those of Phocion. His conduct during ten years had altered very much for the worse with the opportunities which unchecked power placed at his disposal. The liberality and intelligence of his earlier period gave place to many Oriental vices in his second; and the Athenians, who in the first instance had erected three hundred and sixty bronze statues to his honour, at length regarded him as an oppressor, acting in the interests of a foreign sovereign.

SEA-FIGHT BETWEEN PTOLEMY AND DEMETRIUS POLIORCETES OFF SALAMIS.

When, therefore, Demetrius Poliorcetes appeared with his fleet in the Piræus, the Phalerean Demetrius was compelled to give up the city, and retire to Thebes. The new-comer soon reduced the Macedonian garrison in Munychia, which in truth offered but slight resistance; and he then promised the citizens a large gift of corn and ship-timber. The Athenians were so delighted with this new turn in their fortunes that, in a slavish spirit which showed how little they were fitted for the liberty now about to be restored to them, they deified both Demetrius Poliorcetes and his father Antigonus. The existence of slavery in these Greek republics was, however, always a vitiating element, calculated to promote a servile habit on the part of those who held their fellow-creatures in bondage. It is

on record that the population of Attica at this period consisted of only 21,000 freemen (excluding their wives and families), and 400,000 slaves. Poliorcetes was disgusted by the flattery of which his father and himself were made the objects, and declared that the Athenians were a degenerate race. Their conduct at this period was certainly not such as to create a feeling of admiration in any one. Being offended with the acts of Demetrius the Phalerean, who had distinguished himself as a philosopher, they passed a law restricting liberty of teaching in the philosophic schools. To this despotic act the proscribed class retorted by quitting Athens in a body; but the decree was repealed in the following year, and indeed could not under any circumstances have existed long in a community so much devoted to philosophical speculations as that of Athens.

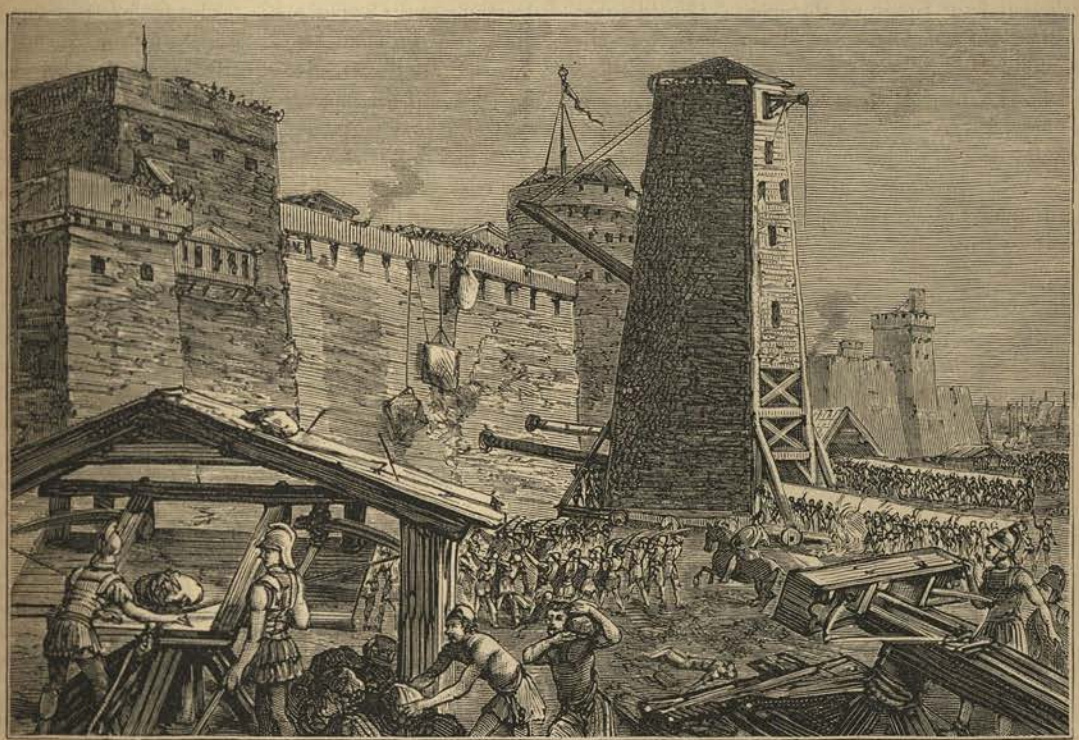
Demetrius Poliorcetes remained but a few months in the city which he had come to liberate, as, in the early part of 306 B.C., he was recalled by his father, who required him for other service. Proceeding to Cyprus, he commenced operations against the city of Salamis, to the relief of which Ptolemy hastened with a body of 10,000 troops on board a hundred and forty vessels. The fortunes of that island had undergone some interesting developments since the expedition of Cimon, about 450 B.C.* In the reign of Abdemon, tyrant of Salamis, a remarkable man arose in that maritime city. Evagoras, a relative of the reigning family, seized on the supreme power, after killing Abdemon, and, in the latter part of the fifth and early part of the fourth century B.C., established a government which was distinguished for strength, dignity, and justice. The personal life of this monarch was pure and blameless, and his policy as a sovereign was such as to advance the prosperity of Salamis in a very high degree. Commerce and agriculture flourished; and Evagoras created an army and navy of respectable size, by which he was enabled to exercise considerable influence in the affairs of Europe and Asia. He invited numerous Greek settlers into his small dominions, and heartily supported the cause of Athens against Sparta, after the terrible defeat of Ægospotami, in 405 B.C. So great was his power at one time that he took Tyre by assault, and for a while, in combination with the Athenians, defied the might of Persia. At length, however, he was worsted; and after his death, in 381 or 376 B.C., Salamis entered on a less prosperous epoch. In the latter part of the same century, the whole island submitted to Alexander the Great. Hence its association with the quarrels of his successor.

The possession of Cyprus had been in dispute between Antigonus and Ptolemy; but after a while the latter succeeded in establishing his authority over the whole island. The possession of this territory, however, was so necessary to Antigonus, who reigned on the opposite coast of Asia, that he was not readily inclined to acknowledge his defeat, and conceived that no one was more likely than his energetic son to retrieve his fortunes in that part of the world. Demetrius overthrew the Ptolemaic general, Menelaus, a short distance from Salamis, and shut up his forces within the walls of that city; but soon afterwards Ptolemy himself appeared upon the coast with his fleet. The sea-fight which ensued resulted in the total defeat of the Egyptian ruler, whose line of battle was broken into fragments by the sudden and fierce impetuosity of his opponent's attack. Demetrius had concealed his ships behind a promontory, and stationed scouts upon the cliffs to give notice of Ptolemy's approach. As the Egyptian fleet was rounding the cape, that of Demetrius suddenly bore down upon it, and completely shattered the order of the squadrons. Eighty long galleys were sunk; forty were captured, together with a hundred transports; and 8,000 men were taken prisoners. Ptolemy could not save more than eight ships out of the one hundred and forty with which he attacked Salamis. The vessels employed on this occasion were of unusual size, and the loss to Ptolemy, who barely succeeded in getting back to Egypt, was proportionately severe. An enormous amount of money, baggage, and material of war, fell into the hands of Demetrius, and Antigonus was so elated by the magnitude and splendour of the victory that he at once assumed the title of king, which he also conferred upon his son. The example was too tempting not to find imitators, and thenceforward the royal dignity was assumed by Ptolemy, Seleucus, and Lysimachus. The disasters of Ptolemy put an end to further resistance on the part of the Cypriotes. The petty kingdoms into which their island had long been divided were probably abolished about this time, and Cyprus, being attached to the dominions of Antigonus, was governed by a viceroy.

An attack on Egypt, in which Antigonus and Demetrius afterwards engaged, was entirely unsuccessful, and the latter then undertook an expedition against Rhodes, which had refused its aid in the recent operations. In 305 B.C., Demetrius attacked the city from the sea by floating batteries, from which stones of enormous weight were hurled

* See p. 376.

against the walls with prodigious force by engines of extraordinary size and power. Notwithstanding its formidable character, however, the attack failed, and Demetrius then determined to invest the place from the land side. Under the direction of Epimachus, an Athenian engineer, he constructed a square wooden tower rising to a height of one hundred and fifty feet, and divided into nine storeys, each filled with armed men, who discharged their missiles through a number of apertures. The weight of this machine was so enormous that 2,300 soldiers were required to set it in motion when finally prepared for attack. Its operations were assisted by two battering-rams, each a hundred and fifty feet long, and propelled by one thousand men. The walls of Rhodes necessarily suffered to a large extent by these combined attacks; but the citizens, being resolute and energetic, continually repaired the breaches, and at the end of a year were still in so good a posture of defence that Demetrius thought it prudent to make peace, and retire from the scene.



THE ATTACK ON RHODES.

During the progress of these events, Cassander, who looked with no favour on Grecian liberty, began a series of operations against the principal cities. Having taken Corinth, he was besieging Athens when he learned that Demetrius was approaching. Hereupon he raised the siege, and retired towards Macedon, but was afterwards defeated in an action near Thermopylæ, when 6,000 of the Macedonian troops went over to the forces of Demetrius. The latter general entered Athens in 304 B.C., and was received with still more abject flattery than on the former occasion. He was lodged in the precincts of the Parthenon, but disgusted all decent people by the extravagant profligacy with which he profaned the temple and outraged the city. The moral character of this man was indeed atrocious; but his abilities as a general were of a high order, and, by a series of brilliant operations in 303 B.C., he reduced the greater part of Greece to submission, and expelled the garrisons of Cassander and Ptolemy. A congress held at Corinth conferred on him the dignity of captain-general of the Greeks, and, on his return to Athens in 302 B.C., he was received as a god by a procession of the people, crowned with garlands, and offering incense. The sycophancy of the Athenians was so great that they consented to initiate Demetrius into the highest grade of the Eleusinian Mysteries, without his first passing through the Lesser Mysteries, and that at a time of year which was not sanctioned by the customs of religion. To preserve the forms of orthodoxy while the essence was entirely perverted, the calendar

was altered for the occasion, and immediately afterwards altered back again. The Athenians, however, gained nothing by this adulation, for Demetrius extorted from them a sum of two hundred and fifty talents, which he spent upon his personal indulgences.

After remaining in Athens about a year, Demetrius was recalled by his father Antigonus, who was being seriously threatened by Lysimachus and Seleucus. It was in 301 B.C. that the struggle between Antigonus and his rivals was terminated by the battle of Ipsus, in Phrygia. On this occasion, the army of Antigonus was entirely defeated, and the old king himself was killed. With all his military genius, Demetrius had been unable to save his parent from discomfiture, and, carrying the remnant of the army with him to Ephesus, he sailed to Cyprus, and there rallied his forces, that he might make sure of Greece. The Greeks, however, and especially the Athenians, turned against him in his misfortune. He was drawing near to Athens when an embassy from that city forbade his further approach; but the people restored to him his wife, with her retinue and property, and the ships and treasures he had left behind. The possessions of Antigonus were shared by Seleucus and Lysimachus, of whom the former took the greater part of Asia Minor, and the latter the whole country from the coast of Syria to the Euphrates, together with a portion of Phrygia and Cappadocia. The father of Seleucus was Antiochus; and when (in 300 B.C.) the son founded on the Orontes, in Syria, a new city, which he intended for the capital of his empire, he named it, after his parent, Antioch. This metropolis became one of the most famous in the world; but for the present we have simply to note its commencement by Seleucus Nicator.

CHAPTER XLVIII

GREECE, MACEDON, AND THE SURROUNDING KINGDOMS.

Demetrius Poliorcetes after the Battle of Ipsus—Deliverance of Athens from the Tyranny of Lachares—Death of Cassander—Feuds in Macedon—The Kingdom of Epirus—Early Life of Pyrrhus—His Development of the Military System of his Country—He regulates the Affairs of Macedon—Demetrius Poliorcetes chosen King by the Macedonian Army—His Wars with Neighbouring Countries—Macedon under the Rule of Pyrrhus—Defeat of Demetrius in Asia: his Captivity and Death—Intrigues of Ptolemy Ceraunus in Macedon—Lysimachus Defeated and Slain by Seleucus—Assassination of Seleucus by Ptolemy Ceraunus—Invasion of Macedon and Thrace by the Gauls—Death of Ptolemy Ceraunus in opposing the Inroad—The Gauls in Greece—Their Repulse at Delphi, and subsequent Dispersal—Settlement of large Numbers in Northern Phrygia, thenceforward called Galatia—The Throne of Macedon obtained by Antigonus Gonatas—Movements in Greece with a View to Independence—Wars in Asia—Attack on Macedon by Pyrrhus, after his Return from Italy—His subsequent Invasion of Sparta—Death of Pyrrhus in an Attempt on Argos—General Character of his Actions—Renewed Predominance of Antigonus Gonatas over Macedon and Greece—Resuscitation of the Achæan League—Its Military Successes under Aratus—Constitution of the League—The Ætolian Federation—Withdrawal of the Macedonian Garrisons from Athens—Decay of Sparta—Attempt of Agis IV. to re-establish the Laws of Lycurgus—His Failure and Death—Renewed Endeavours of Cleomenes—His Defeat by Antigonus Doson—Accession of Philip V. of Macedon—The Second Social War—Perseus, the Last of the Macedonian Kings—Close of the Macedonian and Greek Annals.

How entirely the vast empire of Alexander was dependent for its cohesion on the will of the great master himself, was made apparent by its immediate dissolution when the controlling hand was withdrawn. The dying hero had left his dominions "to the strongest;" but amongst so many able generals it was impossible to say which was unmistakably superior to all the rest. A division of the spoils was therefore inevitable; but this merely opened a fresh chapter of dissensions. Alexander had been dead nearly a quarter of a century when the battle of Ipsus put an end to the power of Antigonus; and the intermediate years were years of civil war and ferocious strife. The victory then achieved by Lysimachus and Seleucus might have seemed to offer some chance of a more settled condition of affairs; but the prospect was soon shown to be baseless. Demetrius Poliorcetes, though sharing in the defeat of his father, was still alive and full of courage, and, after staying some time in Cyprus to reorganize his battalions, he passed over to the Peloponnesus. On arriving there, however, he found that his former allies in that part of Greece had, like the people of Athens, abandoned him in the hour of his darkened fortunes. He consequently left the Peloponnesus in 300 B.C., and, proceeding to the Thracian Chersonese, ravaged the territory of Lysimachus. Here a most unex-

pected event occurred. Seleucus Nicator, against whom he had fought at Ipsus, sent an embassy to him, soliciting the hand of his daughter Stratonice in marriage. This, of course, implied an offer of alliance on the part of Seleucus, and Demetrius gladly accepted such powerful support.

The first result of this arrangement was that Demetrius withdrew for a time into Syria, while Greece fell still more under the influence of Cassander and his partisans. Athens, in particular, passed beneath the rule of a despot named Lachares, who used his power with so much cruelty and injustice that the exiles whom he had banished invited Demetrius Poliorcetes to come to their rescue. The latter, accordingly, again entered Greece in 298 B.C., and, having re-conquered some parts of the Peloponnesus, laid siege to Athens, where he knew he had many supporters, although the military power of Lachares kept the gates shut against him. The city, being strictly blockaded by sea and land, was speedily reduced to famine, and Lachares was glad to make his escape. The people then admitted Demetrius, who behaved to them with much generosity. Not only did he take no revenge on those who had supported the representative of Cassander, but he presented the citizens with a large donation of corn. Nevertheless, he made it clearly understood that Athens was to consider itself in his possession. His own friends were named as magistrates, while garrisons were stationed in the Piræus, at Munychia, and even within the walled circuit of Athens itself. For this acquisition of power in Europe, Demetrius had to pay heavily in Asia, where he lost Cyprus, Syria, and Cilicia. But the death of Cassander, in 297 B.C., presented him with opportunities of advancement, of which he was not slow to avail himself. Demetrius was the brother-in-law of Cassander, and this gave him an excuse for meddling in the affairs of Macedon, the occasion for which was soon supplied by family quarrels.

The successor to Cassander on the Macedonian throne was his eldest son, Philip IV., who died in 295 B.C., after a very short reign. A sanguinary feud then broke out between the two younger sons, Antipater and Alexander. The elder of these killed his mother, Thessalonica, and threatened the life of his brother, who applied for aid both to Demetrius, the dictator of Greece, and to Pyrrhus, King of Epirus, the latter of whom began to make himself conspicuous on the stage of history. We have hitherto heard but little of Epirus, but it was soon to become famous under the guidance of a man of strong character and great military genius. The country lay to the west of Thessaly and Macedon, and extended from those lands to the shores of the Adriatic. It now forms part of Albania, and has at all times been peopled by a hardy, warlike, and somewhat turbulent race of mountaineers. Until the time of Philip of Macedon, the territory so called was divided amongst a number of independent states, some of which were Greek, while others preserved a rude and barbarian character. The principal of these communities was the semi-civilized kingdom of the Molossians—a constitutional monarchy, administered, in accordance with a fixed body of laws, by a family which claimed descent from Achilles, and which gave to Philip of Macedon his ill-mated spouse, Olympias, the mother of Alexander the Great. Two other kingdoms within the borders of Epirus belonged to the Orestæ and the Parauæi — both barbarian tribes. Two republican States—those of the Chaonians and the Thesprotians—were also barbarian; but the Ambracian Republic, which was a colony and dependency of Corinth, had the usual characteristics of Hellenic civilization. The alliance of the Molossian kings with Philip of Macedon so strengthened the power of the former that, about 350 B.C., they were enabled to bring all the Epirotic States under their dominion, so that, at the period to which we are now referring, Epirus was a monarchy of no inconsiderable power. As respects its population, the barbaric element (due to the frequent inroads of Illyrian tribes) undoubtedly predominated over the Greek; yet one must always reckon Epirus as in some measure a Grecian country, for it was the most ancient seat of the Pelasgian religion, and apparently the land out of which the Hellenic race itself issued forth on its great colonizing movement towards the south and east. It was in the district of Thesprotia that the famous city and oracular grove of Dodona were situated; it was there also that Acheron and Cocytus—the infernal rivers of the poets—flowed obscurely through little-known lands;* and on these accounts Epirus was regarded with religious veneration by the whole Greek race. The name signifies a continent, and the country was so called by the inhabitants of the adjacent island of Corcyra, to which Epirus was the nearest land not insular in its formation.

The first who bore the title of King of Epirus was Alexander, the brother of Olympias—a powerful and warlike prince, whom Philip of Macedon himself considered it advisable to propitiate, at a time when his matrimonial quarrels had brought the two monarchies into something like a position

* Dodona may perhaps have been in some other part of Epirus; but Thesprotia is the district usually assigned.

of antagonism. It was on the occasion of the marriage between Philip's daughter, Cleopatra, and Alexander of Epirus, that the great Macedonian was assassinated by Pausanias. After that event, the Epirote sovereign engaged in a war in Southern Italy, where he supported the Tarentines against the Lucanians and Bruttii. During the progress of this war, he was killed in 326 B.C., and was succeeded by his cousin Æacides, who, after a reign of ten years, was deposed by his subjects for taking part in the war of Olympias against Cassander. A few years later he was recalled to the throne, but almost immediately afterwards was slain in battle by Philip, the son of Cassander, in 313 B.C. Pyrrhus, the greatest of the Epirote sovereigns, was the son of Æacides, and, having been born in 318 B.C., was only two years old when his father was driven out of his kingdom. The infant was saved by a servant of the fallen monarch, and brought up by Glaucias, king of the Illyrian Taulantians, who nobly refused a large bribe for betraying him to Cassander. In 306 B.C., Glaucias placed the boy Pyrrhus on the throne of Epirus, but, after five years of nominal rule, he was expelled by his subjects, on the instigation of Cassander. The sister of the young prince had married Demetrius, and to that powerful commander Pyrrhus (then seventeen years of age) fled for refuge, afterwards fighting by his side, with great distinction, at the battle of Ipsus. He then passed into Egypt, where he was engaged in negotiations with Ptolemy, with a view to procuring support for his

MAP OF EPIRUS AND WESTERN GREECE.

brother-in-law, Demetrius. Pyrrhus had been gifted by nature with an attractive manner, and, having won the regards of Ptolemy, that powerful monarch sent him back to Epirus with an army, while the queen, Berenice, bestowed on him her daughter by a former marriage.

On returning to his own country, Pyrrhus was so well received by the people that the reigning monarch found it prudent to conclude an arrangement with him, whereby the kingdom was shared between them. This arrangement, however, did not last long. His colleague is thought to have conspired against him, and to have attempted the administration of poison; at any rate, he was put to death on some such charge, and Pyrrhus became master of the whole country in 295 B.C. Being now unrestrained in his actions, he adopted various plans for developing the prosperity of Epirus. New cities were founded, and the military strength of the people was improved by a series of measures tending to the formation of a more compact and disciplined army. Pyrrhus was a born warrior—perhaps even more a warrior than a general. He loved war for its own sake—for the actual excitement of contest; and was willing to accept his share of defeats, if only he could pursue the exciting game from one rapid and fiery action to another. For the present, however, his attention was absorbed by the work of preparation for his future campaigns, and these arrangements were as yet incomplete when Alexander, the son of Cassander, sought his aid in opposition to his brother Antipater. As the price of this aid, Alexander offered to make over to him certain districts formerly acquired by Macedonia from Epirus, and also to give up Acarnania, Ambracia, and Amphilochia, situated on the western coast. A similar request was, as we have said, addressed at the same time to Demetrius; but Pyrrhus, being nearer to the Macedonian kingdom than his brother potentate, who was now at Athens, was the first to respond by the despatch of an army. Antipater was speedily driven out of Macedon, and soon afterwards put to death by his father-in-law, Lysimachus, in Thrace, whither he had fled for refuge. Pyrrhus then withdrew from the distracted kingdom whose affairs he had temporarily settled, and, fixing his residence at Ambracia, obtained in a little while the neighbouring island of Corcyra. But the arrangement which he had effected in Macedon was soon upset by Demetrius, who, having secured his hold on Athens, marched into the northern kingdom in 294 B.C., and was saluted by the army as king, after he had treacherously procured the assassination of Alexander.

This ambitious and unscrupulous prince reigned over Macedon and the greater part of Greece for about seven years, during which he was engaged in wars with Thrace, Thebes, Thessaly, Ætolia, and Epirus, and was in frequent conflict with Pyrrhus, whose second wife he had carried off. His campaigns in Europe diverted his attention from Asia, where his possessions were shared by Ptolemy and Seleucus; but Demetrius did not abandon the hope of recovering his father's dominions. His designs, however, were too manifest not to arouse the jealousy of the other princes, and in the spring of 287 B.C. Ptolemy sent a powerful fleet against Greece, while at the same time Macedon was invaded by Pyrrhus in one direction, and by Lysimachus in another. Lysimachus, as we have already seen, reigned in Thrace, and had suffered, in 291 B.C., a severe defeat in Dacia at the hands of the Getæ, whose warlike king compelled the invader and all his army to surrender, but speedily released the former. From this reverse he had now recovered, and he combined with Ptolemy and Pyrrhus to deprive Demetrius of his European dominions. Demetrius had become extremely unpopular with his new subjects. Pyrrhus, on the contrary, was regarded with great favour by the Macedonians, who esteemed him as a second Alexander, and loved him for his courage and his pleasing manners. When, therefore, the Epirote sovereign entered Macedon, he was immediately joined by the native troops, and Demetrius, finding himself entirely deserted, left the kingdom in haste. For seven months the Macedonian throne was occupied by Pyrrhus, who, could he have permanently united the two kingdoms of Macedon and Epirus, would have become one of the most powerful of European sovereigns. But he was speedily driven out by Lysimachus, and thenceforward exercised only a precarious control over the more eastern monarchy. After several vain attempts to re-establish his power in Greece, Demetrius set sail for Asia, where he endeavoured to obtain possession, first of the territories of Lysimachus, and afterwards of those ruled by his son-in-law, Seleucus. By Seleucus he was taken prisoner, and kept in a kind of splendid captivity in Syria, until his death, in 283 B.C., at the age of fifty-five. His life is said to have been shortened by the mortification of defeat, and by the continual debaucheries in which he sought to drown the memory of his fall. His remains were given to his son, Antigonus Gonatas, and honoured with a magnificent funeral at Corinth. For some time the government of Greece had been administered by this son, and he ultimately obtained possession of the Macedonian throne. The

dynasty of Demetrius, in fact, lasted until the subjection of Macedon by the Romans, in the time of Perseus.

Previous, however, to the accession of Antigonus Gonatas, Macedon underwent several changes of fortune. Lysimachus continued to reign at Pella for some years, and possessed, in addition, all that part of Europe which had been included in the dominions of Philip, together with the greater portion of Asia Minor. The other countries of Asia were ruled by Seleucus, while Egypt still remained under the sceptre of Ptolemy. The Egyptian sovereign, however, was now old, and in 285 B.C. he abdicated in favour of his son by Berenice, afterwards known as Ptolemy Philadelphus. His son, Ptolemy Ceraunus, whose mother was Eurydice, the first wife of the old king, considered that he had been treated with injustice, and consequently departed to the court of Lysimachus, in Macedon, where he obtained the ardent support of Arsinoe, the wife of Lysimachus, although that princess was the full sister of Ptolemy Philadelphus. Ceraunus was equally devoted to the interests of Arsinoe, and with his own hand murdered her step-son, Agathocles, the heir to the Macedonian throne. Lysandra, the mother of Agathocles, afterwards procured the support of Seleucus, who, marching with an army against Lysimachus, defeated him at Corupedion, near Sardis, in 281 B.C. In this action Lysimachus was killed, and Macedon, with its dependencies, fell under the power of Seleucus. The conqueror shortly afterwards crossed the Hellespont to take possession of his new dominions, and on this peaceful expedition was accompanied by Ptolemy Ceraunus, who had thrown himself on the victor's mercy. His treacherous nature, however, was bent on nothing less than supreme dominion, and, as Seleucus stopped at Lysimachia, in Thrace, to offer sacrifice at a celebrated altar, Ptolemy stabbed him mortally in the back. This was in 280 B.C., and Ptolemy was immediately saluted by the army as their king. The Asiatic dominions of Seleucus passed without opposition to his son, Antiochus Soter; but the murderer of Seleucus obtained temporary possession of his victim's European dominions, although, before he could establish his power, he had to overcome the opposition of Antiochus, Antigonus, and Pyrrhus.

His end was not long in coming. After a few months' reign, distinguished by numerous assassinations and acts of treachery, his dominions in Macedon and Thrace were invaded by an immense body of Gauls or Celts, occupying the countries of Western Europe beyond the Alps and the Rhine, into which they had been driven at an earlier epoch by the pressure of the Scythians. The habits of the Celts were predatory and restless. Possessing the martial virtues in a very high degree, though with little knowledge of the science of war as understood by more civilized nations, they were perpetually seeking to enlarge their dominions, and to obtain a footing in the south of Europe, which attracted them by its greater fertility, its more genial climate, and its accumulated wealth. About a century before, they had crossed the Alps, driven back the Etrurians, and established themselves in that northern part of Italy which was afterwards known as Gallia Cisalpina. Rome itself, as we shall presently have occasion to relate, felt the might of these barbarian hordes, and successive waves of invasion poured down towards the south. When they were at length repelled, the Gauls recrossed the Alps, and, passing eastward round the head of the Adriatic, occupied the plain of the Danube and its tributaries, from which they dispossessed the previous inhabitants. Thence they moved on Northern Illyria, and in 280 B.C. divided their forces into three great bodies, which took as many different ways. One of these, under Cerethrius, proceeded in a north-easterly direction against the Triballi and other Thracian tribes. The second, under Brennus and Acichorius, moved eastward against the Pæonians; while the third, led by Belgius, marched south-east into Macedon. Some of their countrymen had already preceded them in that quarter, and had been allowed by Cassander to form settlements in the neighbourhood of Mount Orbelus. Their power was consequently of a nature to inspire grave apprehension; but Ptolemy Ceraunus regarded them with a levity and indifference which he had soon bitter occasion to repent. The King of Dardania, one of the countries bordering on Macedon, warned his fellow monarch of the impending danger, and offered to lend him a contingent of 20,000 men with which to repel it. Ptolemy, however, was confident of his own ability to defend the kingdom he had won by an atrocious crime, and the Gauls shortly afterwards confronted him in great strength. Their chieftain, Belgius, summoned the Macedonian sovereign to save his realm from subjugation by an assignment of land and a money payment; but he replied in contemptuous and defiant terms. A battle ensued, in which the Macedonian phalanx was completely shattered by the fiery onslaught of these savage warriors, whose war-cry spread dismay among the ranks of their opponents, and whose long and heavy swords dealt destruction wherever they reached.

In this engagement Ptolemy Ceraunus lost his

life, and Macedonia, falling into a state of anarchy, was ravaged by the triumphant barbarians. Meleager, a brother of Ceraunus, and Antipater, the nephew of Cassander, occupied the throne for a few weeks in succession, but neither could make head against the invaders, who, in 279 B.C., were strengthened by a fresh body of their countrymen. The most vigorous and capable of the Macedonian generals at this time was an officer named Sosthenes, to whom, after a period of disorganization, the army offered possession of the crown. The energy and courage of Sosthenes, and the superior discipline of his troops, prevailed against the tumultuous masses of the enemy, who, satiated with plunder, and perhaps finding themselves unequal to the task of regular warfare, retired for a while behind the mountains. Speedily regaining their courage, however, they again invaded Macedon in 278 B.C., and inflicted on Sosthenes a defeat which was followed by his death. This second invasion was led by Brennus, who, after subduing Macedon, penetrated into Southern Greece, forced his way through the pass of Thermopylæ, and got as far as the sacred city of Delphi, attracted, probably, by the reports of the enormous wealth which was supposed to be still preserved in the temple. Here, however, he suffered a severe repulse, and the Greeks of a later age believed that Apollo himself had interposed to defend his shrine from profanation by the barbarians, though we must be content to ascribe the victory to the heroic resistance offered by the Greeks under the command of the Athenian Callippus. It is probable, too, that the Gauls had been to some extent demoralized by the drunken excesses in which they had indulged. At any rate, their defeat was of a most crushing and disastrous nature. Brennus himself was killed, together with many other of the chief leaders, and the vast body of invaders broke up for the time into scattered and disorderly bands, who fel

THE RAVINE AT DELPHI. (SCENE OF THE REPULSE OF THE GAULS.)

easy victims to the revenge of their enemies, to the severity of the winter season, and to insufficiency of food. Some of the survivors escaped across the mountain-range of the Hæmus to the banks of the Danube, while others, bending to the south-east, made their way to the Hellespont and the Propontis. A large number settled temporarily at Byzantium, from which place they were invited into Bithynia by Nicomedes I., the sovereign of that country. Being reinforced by other Gallic immigrants who had crossed the Hellespont, they overran a large part of Asia Minor, and exacted tribute from its princes. Some even found a path over Mount Taurus, and joined the armies of Syria and Egypt. For half a century their power was felt in most parts of North-western Asia; but in 230 B.C. they were so severely defeated by Attalus I., King of Pergamus, that they were glad to settle down in peace within the limits assigned to them in Northern Phrygia, which became thenceforward known as Galatia, Gallo-Græciæ, or Græco-Galatia. Here they mingled with the older Greek population, and became to a considerable extent Hellenized in their manners, while still preserving their original language and their political forms. Those who were disinclined to such a settlement took service under various European and Asiatic princes, by whom their adventurous spirit and fiery valour were highly valued as elements in the military formation of the countries which they joined.

The state of Macedon continued unsettled for some time after the retreat of the Gauls; but in 277 B.C. the throne was claimed by Antigonus Gonatas, the son of Demetrius Poliorcetes, who had been reigning in Central and Southern Greece ever since the defeat of his father by Seleucus. With the aid of some Gallic auxiliaries, he defeated Antipater, the nephew of Cassander, who had once more made a feeble attempt to govern the country, and with no great difficulty established himself in the seat of power. The appearance of Antigonus Gonatas in Macedon may have been due to the fact that during the previous three years his power in Greece had been rendered precarious by a renewed effort on the part of several of the States to regain the liberty of former days. A confederacy had been formed against him under the leadership of Sparta, aided by Egyptian money and ships. The Ætolians were the close allies of Gonatas, and, as they had cultivated the plain of Cirrha, which, as often before explained, was devoted to the service of Apollo, an Amphictyonic war was declared against them by the allies. Areus, King of Sparta, was general of the combined forces; but his army was completely worsted by the Ætolians, and, although the war still went on, and the Macedonian garrisons were expelled from the ports of Athens, no important change was effected in the general condition of Greece. Still, it may have appeared doubtful to Antigonus Gonatas whether he would be able to maintain himself in Hellas; and this consideration may have induced him to enter Macedon, and endeavour to obtain a throne of greater solidity and permanence.

The Macedonians appear to have received the son of Demetrius Poliorcetes with submission, if not with favour; but his pretensions were disputed by Antiochus Soter, a son of Seleucus, who had succeeded to the throne of Syria. He therefore crossed over into Asia, and, forming an alliance with the Bithynian king, Nicomedes, inflicted upon Antiochus so severe a defeat that he was obliged to temporise. Abandoning all further opposition, he recognized Antigonus as the sovereign of Macedonia, and gave him his sister Phila in marriage. Antigonus thereupon returned to his own realm, repulsed a fresh attack of the Gauls, and for a time established his power against all rivals. It was not long, however, before he was threatened by a still more serious danger. From 280 to 275 B.C., Pyrrhus had been absent in Italy, conducting a series of campaigns which form a portion of the history of Rome; but in the latter of those years he returned to Epirus, and, having enlisted a number of Gallic mercenaries, began to contemplate an attack on Macedon. To this enterprise he was prompted by the restless spirit of his troops, whom he had not the means of supporting unless by continual inroads into other territories. Entering Macedon, therefore, in 273 B.C., he twice defeated Antigonus Gonatas, and compelled him to take refuge in flight. Nevertheless, Pyrrhus obtained only a partial hold on Macedon, and from the more complete subjugation of the land he was soon called off to assist Cleonymus, a citizen of Sparta, in obtaining the throne of that State. After plundering the neighbourhood of the capital, he forced his way into the streets, but was ultimately driven out by the united exertions of the Spartan men and women. The arrival of King Areus himself, who had been in Crete, and the march of auxiliaries from Corinth, had the effect of deterring Pyrrhus from any further assault, and, quitting Laconia in 272 B.C., he marched towards Argos, at that time distracted by two factions, one of which requested the aid of Pyrrhus, while the other sought assistance from Antigonus Gonatas, who was now in Southern Greece. On his route to Argos, Pyrrhus

was suddenly attacked by Areus, who awaited his approach in ambush, and cut off the rear of his army. This misfortune, however, did not prevent Pyrrhus from hurrying forward; and, leaving his son Ptolemæus behind to deal with the Spartans, he proceeded on his road, but shortly afterwards learned that the young man had been killed in a combat with the enemy. Hereupon Pyrrhus turned back, successfully attacked the Spartans, and with his own hand despatched the officer who had slain his son.

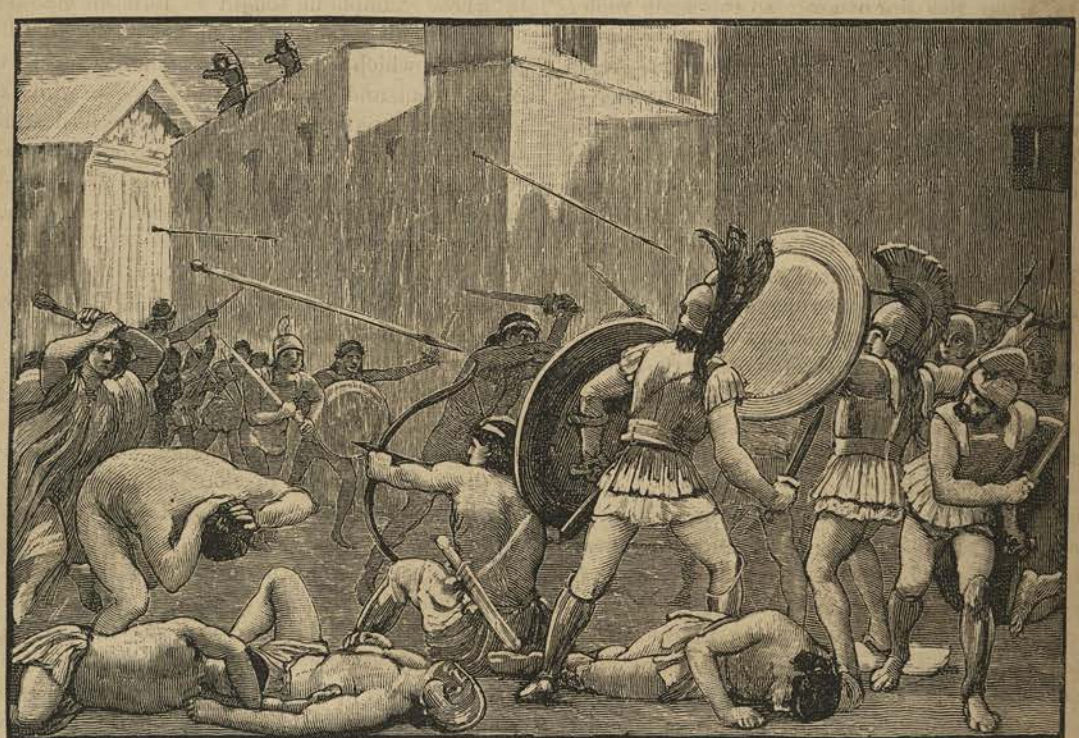
The delay was unfortunate to the main undertaking, as in the meanwhile Antigonus had occupied the hills near Nauplia. On arriving outside Argos, Pyrrhus encamped in the plain, and the Argives, fearing the result of a contest, entered into negotiations with both commanders. They promised that their city should be neutral between the two opponents, if a guarantee were given that it should not be attacked. Antigonus consented, and yielded up his son as a hostage; but Pyrrhus, while equally agreeing to the proposed terms, furnished no pledge of his good faith. During the next night, the gates were opened to him by the chief of one of the factions, and Pyrrhus, marching in with his forces, took possession of the market-place. The citizens were asleep at the time, but, being roused by the noise, and feeling justly indignant at the breach of a clear understanding, they sent to Antigonus, who entered the city from an opposite gate, and was shortly afterwards joined by the Spartan king Areus, at the head of a select body of troops. A confused and irregular combat then took place in the narrow streets of the city, under the darkness of night; and, at daybreak, Pyrrhus discovered that all the fortified posts were occupied by his antagonists. He perceived the necessity of getting out of the city with the utmost haste, and, while endeavouring to do so, was killed by a woman, who, seeing the king in combat with her son, threw a tile upon his head from the roof of her house, and brought him to the ground, where he was soon despatched. His head was cut off and carried to Antigonus, who ordered a magnificent funeral, and presented the ashes of the hero to his son Helenus.

In many respects, Pyrrhus was one of the greatest generals of antiquity. Hannibal is alleged to have placed him in the very first rank among the masters of the art of war; but, as there are two versions of what the African is reported to have said, his opinion on the point is by no means certain. Nevertheless, Pyrrhus was regarded, both by his contemporaries and his successors, as a man of extraordinary powers, although he was assuredly not always successful. Antigonus Gonatas compared him to a gambler who is often favoured by the dice, but who does not know how to turn his fortune to account. He was, in fact, reckless of results in any large and general sense, being eager for nothing so much as for a continual series of contests, in which his appetite for battle could find its proper stimulus and food. Never pausing to consolidate his conquests, he frequently lost by indifference what he had gained by some fiery and dazzling movement. Alexander the Great was the model by whose example he sought to form his character and direct his actions; but he lacked the unfailing judgment which tempered the passionate zeal of the Macedonian, and saved him from reverses which the adventurous nature of his exploits seemed almost to invite. Although appearing, in some instances, to proceed after a desultory fashion, Pyrrhus was a student of the art of war, and wrote several books on encampments, and on the ways of training an army. The Romans, who had good opportunities of judging his military genius, held him in great esteem, while Pyrrhus, on the other hand, was so much delighted with the courage and discipline of the Romans that he declared he would conquer the whole world if he had such men for his subjects. As a man, Pyrrhus was undoubtedly much superior to the great majority of the Alexandrine princes. He cannot be charged with the atrocious acts which were common with those military sovereigns, and his conduct as a husband and a father seems to have been beyond reproach. His manly nature ensured him friends who were not flatterers, and his subjects always regarded him with affectionate respect. Yet it cannot be said that his moral standard, in the largest sense of the term, was of a high order. He loved war for its own sake, and a man's nature must necessarily suffer from such a passion. His acts and motives were occasionally of a doubtful character, and he cannot escape the reproach of being often hard, and sometimes treacherous.

Some time before his death, Pyrrhus had been asked by one of his sons to which of them he would leave his possessions, and had replied (apparently imitating the last words of Alexander) that they should go to him who had the sharpest sword. None of them, however, had a sword sharp enough to keep Macedonia in subjection; and when the great soldier had departed, that kingdom was recovered by Antigonus Gonatas, who at the same time extended his power over the greater portion of the Peloponnesus, in the cities of which he established tyrants, who acted as his representatives. After a while, he was engaged

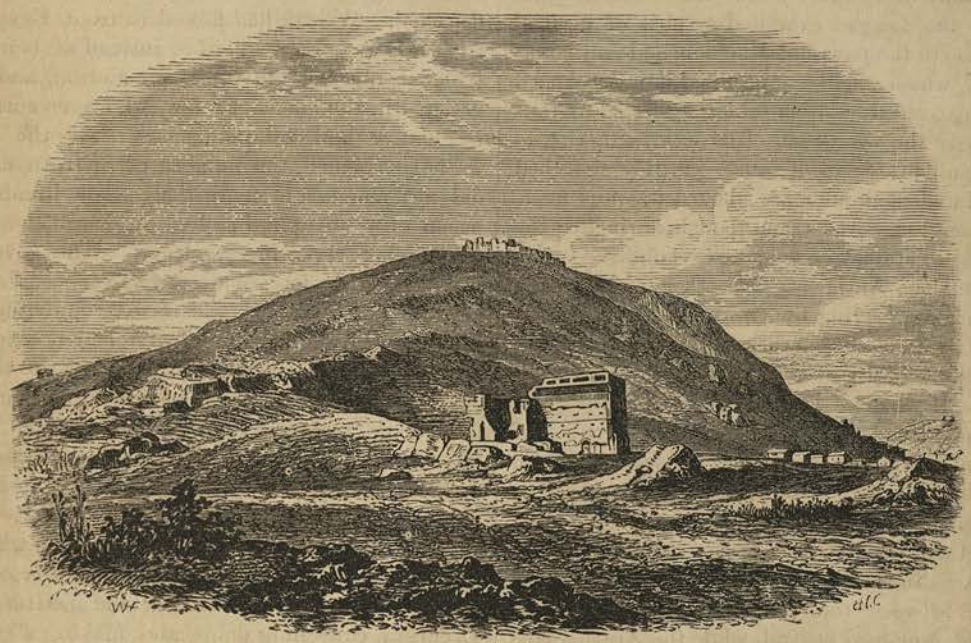
in a war with the Athenians, who were supported by Sparta and Egypt. The war lasted from 268 to 263 B.C.; and the Athenians would probably have been overwhelmed, as their allies rendered them but little service, had not Antigonus been called away to Macedon by another Epirotic invasion, led by Alexander, the son of Pyrrhus. The success of this prince was very brief; and when Demetrius, the son of Antigonus, moved against him, he was not only driven out of Macedon, but for a short time deposed in Epirus itself. Returning to Athens, Antigonus obtained possession of that city, apparently in 262 B.C., and shortly afterwards became master of all Attica. Macedonian garrisons were once more placed in the Piræus and at Munychia; yet at the same time Athens was declared free, and Antigonus, who often visited that centre of intellect and learning, paid great honour to the philosophers, and especially to Zeno. The events of this reign are for the most part very obscure, and long gaps occur, during which it is impossible to say what was the progress of events. In 244 B.C., however, Antigonus Gonatas obtained possession of Corinth by an act of treachery. This was the last of his successes, for in the latter years of his life a new power was growing up in the Peloponnesus, with which he was not strong enough to contend: a power which may be described as the last manifestation of Hellenic greatness—the splendour which immediately preceded the extinction of Greece as one of the independent nations of the world.

At a very early period in Grecian history, a league had been formed among the twelve chief cities of Achaia. The subjects which engaged its attention were mainly religious, and its political importance was insignificant. After the Macedonian supremacy, the Achæan League had been suppressed, and Antigonus Gonatas now held all the cities formerly constituting the federation. These cities suffered much from the insolence of the governors set over them by the Macedonian king, and a spirit of resistance was gradually aroused, which prompted the re-establishment of the ancient alliance. Two out of the original twelve cities had by this time been destroyed by earthquakes; but the other ten coalesced in the work of patriotism. In the times described by Homer, the Achæans were the dominant community in Greece; but when, owing to the Dorian immigration, they were confined to a small territory on the northern coast of the Peloponnesus, they sank into an insig-



REPULSE OF PYRRHUS FROM SPARTA.

nificance from which they issued forth only in the final ages of Greek history. Circumstances favoured the revival of the old League. Although occasionally visiting Greece, Antigonus held his court for the most part at Pella, the Macedonian capital; so that, in the remote province of Achaia, it was a comparatively easy matter to develop an organization hostile to his predominance. The chief agent in the reconstitution of the League was Aratus of Sicyon, an ancient city on the Corinthian Gulf; and it was about the year 251 B.C. when the federation began once more to take an active part in politics, although there had been some slight resuscitation, nearly thirty years before, at the period of the Gallic invasion. In course of time, various cities asserted their independence of the Macedonian garrisons, or of their native tyrants; but it required a genius like that of Aratus to give force and vitality to the movement. Sicyon, the native city of that reformer, had long been governed by despots, and Aratus had lived as an exile at Argos. Nevertheless, he had not abandoned the idea of freeing Sicyon; and in 251 B.C. he collected a band of exiles, surprised the city in the night, and put an end to the government from which the people suffered. He then procured the adhesion of Sicyon to the Achæan League, and the confederacy was greatly strengthened by so important an addition. The body was ruled by a Strategus, or General, who was assisted by a secretary, and by a council of ten. The administration, however, was controlled by a general assembly, which met twice a year in a sacred grove near Ægium. Every Achæan who had attained the age of thirty possessed the right of sitting in this general assembly, of electing the officers of the League, and of deciding all questions of war, peace, or foreign alliances. In 245 B.C., and again in 243, Aratus was elected general of the League, and in the latter of those years headed a sudden and skilful attack on Corinth, which resulted in the capture of that city, then held by the Macedonians. Corinth was pleased at its deliverance, and immediately joined the League, which in subsequent years was still further augmented by Megara, Trœzen, Epidaurus, Hermione, Ægina, Salamis, and the whole of the Peloponnesus, with the exception of Sparta, Elis, and some of the Arcadian towns.



ARGOS.

By the constitution of the Achæan League, a complete equality was established amongst the allied cities, each of which had one vote, and one vote only, in the Federal Congress. The union of the several cities for the general purposes of the association was not suffered to interfere in any way with their domestic affairs, or the appointment of their own local magistrates and governors. But the alliance was none the less binding as to the corporate action of the confederacy in respect of external enemies. The

suffrage, as we have seen, was essentially democratic; but, as the offices were unpaid, and the citizens had to travel at their own expense when they attended the meetings of the Congress, the natural effect was to throw the possession of power very much into the hands of the wealthy. The Strategus, or General, was invested with considerable authority, for he had the entire direction of the armed force, and in effect controlled the policy of the League in all matters during his term of office; but the influence thus arising was held in check by the provision that he could be re-elected only every other year. Emboldened by its success, the League exhibited a spirit of decided opposition to the power of Macedon, and Antigonus Gonatas, whose warlike nature had been weakened by old age, refrained from taking up the glove thus vauntingly thrown down. The cities adhering to the new alliance were of course entirely detached from Macedonian influence; but Antigonus made no attempt to recover them, though he incited the Ætolians to attack the federated republics.

In 239 B.C., Antigonus Gonatas expired at the age of eighty, leaving the crown to his son, Demetrius II., who at once formed a close alliance with Epirus, and shortly afterwards came into collision with the Ætolians. For some few years, the Ætolians had formed a league of their own—a union of tribes, not of cities—and, being offended with the Bœotians, who were inclined to favour the Achæan Confederation, had entirely crushed them, and absorbed their ancient organization into the newer alliance. Thus the larger part of Greece was divided between the rival Leagues; but some few cities remained neutral, while the Acarnanians entered into a separate confederacy, although still subject to Macedonian influence. The strongest of these associations was undoubtedly that of the Achæans, who were aided with funds by the existing King of Egypt, Ptolemy III., surnamed Euergetes. They had a leader of great ability in Aratus, who, though possessing no great talents as a general in the open field, nor even ordinary courage as a soldier, was nevertheless a masterly strategist, a clever negotiator, and a man of boundless resource and ingenuity in the contrivance of those surprises and unexpected attacks which not unfrequently result in the most brilliant and solid triumphs. One of his greatest successes of a peaceful nature was at Athens, where he persuaded the Macedonian governor to withdraw his garrisons from the Piræus and Munychia. This incident occurred about the year 239 B.C.; after which date the Athenians became allies of the Achæans, though they did not actually join the League. Athens had now fallen from its high position as one of the political leaders of Greece, though it was still famous for its schools of philosophy. Indeed, the whole of Greece was in a state of great depression, owing to the interference or the patronage of foreign Powers, the wars by which it had been continually devastated for many years, the prevalence of famine and pestilence, and the consequent decline of the population.

Amidst the general decay, Sparta still retained a nominal independence; but the masculine character of the Lacedæmonians, which had at one time ensured the greatness of their commonwealth, had now departed. Wealth had flowed in from Egypt and from other sources, and this, instead of being distributed through the whole population, had accumulated in the hands of a few, who were corrupted by luxury and self-indulgence. At the period we have reached, the number of Spartan citizens did not amount to more than seven hundred, of whom only about a hundred held sufficient land to preserve their independence. The governing power was therefore confined to a very small body, beyond the limits of which were multitudes of slaves, serfs, and labourers, who had no right to any share in the government. Since the time of Alexander the Great, the Spartan kings had been in the habit of giving their services to foreign potentates for payment in money; and the State, thus degraded in its highest officials, soon became corrupt in every department of the national life. From this ignominious condition, Agis IV., who succeeded to the crown in 244 B.C., endeavoured to raise his country by restoring the institutions of Lycurgus, cancelling debts, and making a new distribution of lands. To set an example of patriotism, he devoted all his own property, and that of his family, to the public necessities; but these reforms were opposed by his colleague, Leonidas, who found considerable support among the wealthy citizens. Agis deposed Leonidas, and seemed likely to succeed in his measures, when his attention was diverted by an expedition to assist Aratus against the Ætolians. In his absence, Leonidas was reinstated on the throne, and Agis, on his return in 241 B.C., was put to death by those whom he had provoked. When thus overtaken by a cruel fate, he was not more than three-and-twenty years of age, and, had he lived, it is possible, though perhaps hardly probable, that he would have restored the greatness of the Spartan name.

Singularly enough, his attempts at reform were renewed by Cleomenes, the son of his rival, who married the widow of Agis, and succeeded his father in 236 B.C. Cleomenes made some progress in his

schemes of government, but unfortunately became involved in a war with the Achæans for the possession of Orchomenus, Tegea, and Mantinea. These towns, which the Ætolians had ceded to Sparta, were seized by Aratus on behalf of the Achæan League; but Cleomenes acted with so much vigour, and with such repeated success, that Aratus, finding himself at a disadvantage, was compelled to solicit aid of the Macedonians, to curb whose power the Achæan League had been established. Demetrius II., who had been at war both with the Achæans and Ætolians, and had re-established Macedonian ascendancy over the whole of Northern Greece, was now dead, and the government was administered by Antigonus Doson, as guardian of Philip, the youthful king. The regent was grandson of Demetrius Poliorcetes, and nephew of Antigonus Gonatas. He was a man of honour and of military capacity, and, on the application of Aratus, he marched into the Peloponnesus in 223 B.C., and compelled Cleomenes to retire into Laconia, after a struggle of two years' duration. The war with Aratus had lasted about six years, and Cleomenes, before resuming active operations, found it necessary to recruit his forces. Having raised a considerable sum of money by allowing six thousand Helots to purchase their freedom, he levied fresh troops, and in 221 B.C. destroyed Megalopolis. After several other successes, he was attacked by Antigonus Doson at Salatia, in Laconia, and so thoroughly beaten that his army was almost annihilated. Flying to Egypt, he took refuge with Ptolemy Euergetes, but was afterwards imprisoned by his successor, Ptolemy Philopator. In 220 B.C., he managed to escape from Egypt, and, returning to his own country, endeavoured once more to rouse the Spartans to resistance, but, finding their spirit entirely dead, perished in despair by his own hand.

Antigonus Doson died the same year as his rival. He had been hurriedly recalled to Macedon by an invasion of the Illyrians, and, shortly after defeating them, expired of a natural disorder. Philip V., the son of Demetrius II., to whom Antigonus had acted as regent, now succeeded to the exercise of power. He was not more than seventeen years of age at the time, and the Ætolians, considering themselves safe from interference, made incursions into the Peloponnesus. They were masters of Locris, Phocis, and Bœotia, together with portions of Acarnania, Thessaly, and Epirus. Some cities of the Peloponnesus were also in their possession, and they had acquired a power over the Amphictyonic Council, and the oracle of Delphi. Messenia, in the south-west of the Peloponnesus, was menaced by their marauding armies, and Aratus, who led a force of Achæans to the assistance of the threatened commonwealth, was defeated in a battle near Caphyæ. Once more the support of Macedon was solicited by the Achæan League, and in 220 B.C. Philip V. entered into an alliance with the confederation. The ensuing struggle is known as the second Social War. Young as he was, Philip distinguished himself by several victories over the Ætolians, but concluded a treaty of peace with them in 217 B.C., that he might turn his energies in a very different direction. He had determined to take part with Carthage in the war which that Republic was then waging against Rome; and this resolution was the commencement of a series of events which several years later led to the subjugation of Greece by the great Italian race whose dominion was on the Tiber. The history of Greece, in fact, now merges in the history of Rome, and the final incidents in its annals must be left to the records of that later Power which was destined to overshadow the whole Western world. Suffice it here to say that Philip V. died in 179 B.C., and was succeeded by his son Perseus, the last monarch of Macedon. Philip was undoubtedly a man of valour and ability; but he had many of the faults of barbarism, and one of his worst acts was the assassination of Aratus, in 213 B.C., by a slow and secret poison, in revenge for certain objections which that leader had made to his arbitrary interference in the affairs of Greece.

The history of Macedon is little more than the history of a barbaric Power, great in the field of battle, but incapable of establishing any political organization of a higher type than that which commends itself to the minds of soldiers. In some respects, the most capable of its monarchs was Philip, the father of Alexander the Great; for, although his military genius was either unequal to that of his son, or denied fitting opportunities for similar triumphs, his powers as a ruler and organizer were superior. Could he have succeeded in establishing a settled and regular government over the whole of Greece, and had he at the same time animated that government by the best qualities of Grecian freedom, he might have created a monarchy more truly illustrious than any which the world had then known. But in this he was baffled, partly by his own domineering ambition, and partly by the inherent vices of the Greek character. From the period of his death, the decline of Greece, which had begun long before, proceeded with fatal rapidity; and when a certain point in the long course of degradation had been reached, nothing remained but the ascendancy of the stranger, and the organizing despotism of Rome.

CHAPTER XLIX.

SYRIA UNDER THE SELEUCIDÆ, AND EGYPT UNDER THE PTOLEMIES.

The Kingdom of the Seleucidæ (Syria)—Military Successes of Seleucus Nicator—Organization and Government of the Syrian Kingdom—Situation and General Character of Antioch—Succession of the Seleucidæ down to 65 B.C.—Absorption of Syria into the Roman System—Vicious and Cruel Character of the Syrian Monarchs—Egypt under the Ptolemies—Wise and Liberal Rule of Ptolemy I. (Soter)—System of Government under the Macedo-Greek Dynasty—Conquests of the First Ptolemy—Public Institutions and Edifices: the Museum, the Pharos, the Temple of Serapis, &c.—Reign of Ptolemy II. (Philadelphus)—Prosperous State of Egypt—Military and Naval Strength of the Country—The Alexandrian Libraries—Translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek (the Septuagint)—Vices of the Second Ptolemy—Warlike Achievements of Ptolemy III.—Favour extended to the Egyptian Religion—Decay of the Kingdom under Ptolemy IV.—Progressive Decline under subsequent Reigns—Egypt annexed to the Roman Republic.

Of the kingdoms into which the possessions of Alexander were broken up after his death, two of the most important were those of Syria and of Egypt. The boundaries of the latter derived a sufficient exactness from the physical conformation of the land, and from the ancient traditions of the people; but the former fluctuated a good deal in accordance with the fortunes of war. The kingdom of Syria is sometimes called that of the Seleucidæ, from Seleucus Nicator ("the Conqueror"), who founded it, and from those of his descendants who were named after him. It commenced in 312 B.C., when Seleucus, the son of Antiochus, availing himself of a condition of affairs favourable to his designs, returned to the satrapy of Babylon, from which he had been expelled a few years earlier, and consolidated his power. The term "kingdom" was not employed, either there or in other Alexandrine satrapies, until six years later; but the government was in fact a monarchy, and acknowledged no superior. It consisted of Babylonia, Susiana, Media, and Persia, but was so rapidly augmented that by 306 B.C. Seleucus had acquired all the countries lying between the Euphrates and the Indus from west to east, and the Jaxartes and the Indian Ocean from north to south. Syria, however, did not then form part of his realm. Seleucus was a prince of great enterprise, and, shortly after his assumption of the regal dignity, in 306 B.C., he undertook a campaign against Sandracottus, or Chandragupta, an Indian monarch reigning in the country about the western head-streams of the Ganges, who is said to have fought against Alexander during his expedition into the Punjâb. Sandracottus was defeated by Seleucus, and consented to furnish him with five hundred elephants, and to throw open that part of Asia to external traders. After the battle of Ipsus (301 B.C.), in which Seleucus fought on behalf of Lysimachus and Cassander, the dominions of the Asiatic king were considerably enriched by the acquisition of Syria and other territories. It was then (as already related) that he removed the seat of his government from Babylonia to Syria, and founded on the Orontes the magnificent city of Antioch.

Many of the successors of Alexander sought to strengthen their position by intermarriages among their own families; and for this reason Seleucus espoused Stratonice, the daughter of Demetrius, in 300 B.C. A period of tranquillity followed this union, and Seleucus employed the next thirteen years in consolidating his immense and varied dominions, in laying out his new capital, and in enlarging its port, Seleuceia. The empire was divided into seventy-two satrapies, all of which were placed under the direction of Greeks or Macedonians. The standing army, however, was composed chiefly of native troops, but these were officered by Europeans. It is doubtful whether Seleucus acted wisely in transferring the seat of government from Babylon to Antioch, for the situation of the latter city was too far west to allow of sufficient control over the more eastern provinces. But the generals of Alexander copied their master in a passion for founding new cities, to which they gave appellations derived either from themselves or from their relations. Seleucus was no exception to the rule, and he lavished the utmost pains on Antioch, which was to perpetuate the memory of his father.

The situation of this metropolis was about equally removed from Byzantium and Alexandria, the distance each way being some seven hundred miles. Built in an angle of the Lebanon and Taurus ranges, where the river Orontes breaks through the mountains, it stood partly on a small island, partly on level ground not insular, and partly on the abrupt and craggy ascent of Mount Silpius. Close by was Daphne, the famous sanctuary of Apollo; and on this account the city was

sometimes known as "Antioch by Daphne," to distinguish it from other Antiochs. In process of time, it became the third city in the world for grandeur, wealth, greatness, and population. By Strabo it was called Tetrapolis, as being divided into four distinct portions, each surrounded by its own wall, while the whole city was encircled by ramparts common to all. The first of these walls was built by Seleucus Nicator himself; the second by his immediate successors; the third by Seleucus Callinicus; and the fourth by Antiochus Epiphanes. Each of the additional walls represented the further growth of the city, which in time attained a size not surpassed by many cities of the ancient world. Distinguished at all periods for luxury and voluptuousness, Antioch became, in the later ages of Paganism, the seat of some of the most impure rites of a shameless idolatry. The neighbouring grove of Daphne—a spot of exquisite beauty, where, in the midst of wild vegetation and gushing fountains, stood a magnificent temple and colossal statue of Apollo—had an evil reputation for the orgies which, under the name of religion, were conducted there; indeed, Antioch seems to have been a kind of centre, where some of the worst developments of Asiatic heathenism found a common meeting-ground, and corrupted the nobler systems of Hellas. Perhaps for that very reason, and as a natural reaction against extravagant debasement, Antioch was one of the earliest places to adopt the Christian religion; and it was there that, in the year 42 of our era, the followers of the new faith were first called Christians. The temples, theatres, aqueducts, baths, palaces, and other public buildings of Antioch, were among the most splendid in the world; and its situation, in the midst of cypresses and laurels, flowering shrubs and Oriental fruit-trees, was so exquisite that the metropolis of the Seleucidæ received the appellation of "Antioch the Beautiful, the Crown of the East."

The chief incidents in the reign of Seleucus Nicator have already been described, together with the assassination of that monarch by Ptolemy Ceraunus. Antiochus I. succeeded to his father's dominions in 280 B.C., and soon became involved in hostilities with Zipœtes and Nicomedes, kings of Bithynia. The latter of these monarchs summoned the Gauls to his assistance, and by their aid deprived Antiochus of two provinces in distant parts of his dominions. It was then that North-western Lydia was erected into the kingdom of Pergamus. In 275 B.C., Antiochus inflicted a serious defeat on the Gauls, on which account he received the cognomen of Soter, or Saviour. But for the most part his reign was characterized by a series of misfortunes, and his kingdom was reduced by the successes of his opponents. Finally, he was defeated and slain in a battle with the Gauls near Ephesus, in 261 B.C. The throne was then occupied by his son, Antiochus II., surnamed Theos, or "the god." Notwithstanding this presumptuous appellation, his character was base and contemptible, and his effeminacy invited attacks which were not slow in coming. The kingdoms of Parthia and Bactria were formed out of his eastern possessions, and the only triumphs he achieved during a reign of fifteen years were in a war with Egypt. In 246 B.C., he was murdered by his wife Laodice, that she might secure the throne for her son, Seleucus II. (Callinicus, or the Victorious). The reign was one of almost continual wars, which were waged with Ptolemy Euergetes of Egypt, Arsaces II. of Parthia, and Antiochus Hierax, the brother of Seleucus, who, when a boy of only fourteen, revolted against the king, and, supported by his uncle Andromachus, and a number of Gallic mercenaries, obtained a few marked successes. Yet, on the whole, Seleucus maintained his power, and generally retrieved his losses by some unexpected stroke of good fortune. He was killed by a fall from his horse in 226 B.C. His son, Seleucus III., known as Ceraunus, or the Thunderbolt, reigned not more than three years, being assassinated in 223 B.C. by his mutinous and ill-paid soldiers, in an expedition against Pergamus.

The next monarch of Syria was Antiochus III., who has been called the Great, and who certainly did much to reinstate his kingdom in its former position of grandeur and predominance. His reign, which extended over thirty-six years, was checkered by many successes and many misfortunes; but the successes belong rather to the earlier than to the later part of his reign. By his military energy, Antiochus arrested the progress of the Parthians and Bactrians, restored his eastern frontier, and expelled the Egyptians from Asia. But, having afterwards provoked the hostility of the Romans, he suffered grievously at their hands, and could purchase peace only by the cession of all Asia Minor excepting Cilicia, and by consenting to pay a war-indemnity of 12,000 talents. These events will be more particularly described in connection with the Roman annals; but it may here be mentioned that the necessity of furnishing the immense contribution demanded by Rome compelled Antiochus to plunder the Oriental temples, and that during a tumult at Elymaïs, occasioned in this way, he was killed in 187 B.C. Two years

before his death, Armenia had revolted and become independent; so that Antiochus III. left a very diminished kingdom to his son and successor, Seleucus IV. The reign of this monarch was entirely uneventful, and came to a close in 176 B.C., when the king was murdered by Heliodorus, his treasurer. For a brief time the throne was occupied by his assassin; but Antiochus IV., commonly known as Antiochus Epiphanes, or the Illustrious—a brother of the late king—obtained possession of the crown by the help of Eumenes of Pergamus. His war with Egypt was attended by considerable success; but he was compelled to relinquish all his advantages by the interposition of Rome. Some of the most important events of this reign were connected with the Jews, whom the former kings of Syria had treated with liberality, but who were persecuted by Antiochus Epiphanes with extreme rigour. We are told that he plundered the Temple to provide himself with money for his extravagant pleasures, and that he set up an image of Jupiter Olympius in the Holy of Holies. The plunder of religious edifices appears to have been a favourite device of this monarch whenever his treasury was low, and it is said that an unsuccessful attempt of this nature, at Elymaïs, was followed by so tremendous an access of superstitious terror that Antiochus died of exhaustion at Tabæ, a town of Pisidia, in 164 B.C. According to some accounts, however, his death was differently characterized. His persecution of the Jews—the main facts of which are related in the Second Book of Maccabees—provoked so spirited a resistance on the part of that people that one army after another was sacrificed in the endeavour to quell the revolt. While himself repressing a movement in Persia, Antiochus Epiphanes received tidings of a serious defeat in Judæa, and, at once abandoning the enterprise in which he was engaged, hastened back towards Antioch, but at Tabæ was seized with violent internal pains, which brought his life to an end.

THE GREAT HARBOUR AT ALEXANDRIA.

His character was disgraced by many vices. To cruelty he added licentiousness, and his love of frivolous diversions brought him into contempt even among a people whose own standards were not the most exalted.

After the death of Antiochus IV., the monarchy was continued in the person of his son, the fifth Antiochus, a boy only twelve years old. A nominal reign of two years, during which the regent Lysias allowed the Parthians and the Romans to obtain considerable influence over the kingdom, was terminated by the assassination, in 162 B.C., of the youthful monarch, and of the regent, by Demetrius, the son of Seleucus IV., who then seized upon the regal power. Demetrius made several attempts to subdue the Jews, who had by this time re-established their independence under the Maccabees; but he was compelled by the Romans to desist from his attacks. After some years of discord and ill-success, Demetrius found himself opposed by a league of neighbouring kings, to which the Romans gave their support. Alexander Balas, a natural son of Antiochus Epiphanes, came forward as a pretender to the throne, and, being supported by the Jews, and by the kings of Pergamus and Egypt, was enabled to prevail over his opponents, though not without a struggle of two years' duration. In the second of two important battles, Demetrius was vanquished and slain, and Alexander Balas succeeded to the throne in 151 B.C. His character was no better than that of the Syrian kings generally, and, after five years of vicious self-indulgence, during which he committed the actual government of the country to a favourite, he was defeated by Demetrius, the eldest son of the late king, who had the support of Egypt in his efforts to obtain the throne. Flying to Abæ,

COINS OF THE MACEDONIAN SOVEREIGNS OF SYRIA AND EGYPT.

in Arabia, Balas was there assassinated by his own officers, and Demetrius II., surnamed Nicator, next assumed the regal diadem. A period of civil war ensued, for Demetrius gave no greater satisfaction than his predecessors, and found himself in turn opposed by malcontents. One of the most interesting events of his reign was his acknowledgment of Jewish independence, in 142 B.C. Two years later, he was worsted by the Parthian monarch Arsaces VI., and, being taken prisoner, was held in captivity for several years, during which time his brother, Antiochus VII., reigned in Syria. This monarch led an expedition into Parthia in 129 B.C., in the hope of delivering his brother, but, after some temporary successes, was attacked by the

Parthians in his winter quarters, and destroyed, together with his whole army.

Shortly before this catastrophe, Demetrius II. had been released, and, making his way to Antioch, he re-established his power, though not for long. Being opposed by a rival who professed to be the son of Alexander Balas, he was defeated, captured, and slain, in 126 B.C. The government was then administered by his widow, Cleopatra, who shared the throne with her son, Antiochus VIII. A large part of Syria, however, was at the same time in possession of the reputed son of Balas; but in 122 B.C. the pretender was crushed by Antiochus, who forced him to swallow poison. In the following year, the victor established his complete supremacy in Syria by putting his mother to death, on the plea that she was conspiring against his own life. Eight years of tranquillity ensued; but the kingdom was now reduced to very small dimensions, and almost exhausted by continual wars and perpetual misgovernment. Civil strife again broke out in 114 B.C., when Antiochus Cyzicenus, the half-brother of Antiochus VIII., attempted to seize the throne. Three years of contest resulted in a partition of the monarchy; but this arrangement, after enduring from 111 to 105 B.C., came to a termination which led to a renewal of the war. From 105 to 96 B.C., Syria was desolated by the operations of rival armies; the country was torn to pieces by internal dissension and foreign invasion; and, finally, Antiochus was assassinated by Heracleon, an officer of his court, who, however, failed to obtain the crown for himself. The remainder of Syrian history is little else than a reduplication of civil broils, assassinations, and acts of ferocity, leading to no definite or permanent result. For about fourteen years—viz., from 83 to 69 B.C.—Syria placed itself under the rule of Tigranes, a powerful monarch of Armenia, and in this way obtained a brief interval of repose; but Tigranes, having supported Mithridates in his war against Rome, was driven out of Syria, and, after the brief reign of Antiochus Asiaticus, the sovereignty of the Seleucidæ was reduced by Pompey to the condition of a Roman province, in the year 65 B.C. When first established as an independent power by Seleucus Nicator, the Syrian kingdom was an empire of immense size and striking grandeur, which, had it been wisely ruled, might have proved a rival to Rome itself. But a succession of vicious and incapable monarchs, who made pleasure in its grossest forms the great object of their lives, led to the progressive disintegration of the country, until all its finest possessions were lost, and little remained to quarrel over but a miserable wreck. Few histories are more deeply stained with blood than that of the Seleucidæ. Their misfortunes were numerous and crushing, but not more so than their crimes and multitudinous immoralities appear to have invited. It is a relief when they vanish from the page of history, and the tortured realm which they had so long abused passes under the firmer and more equitable sway of Rome.

The annals of Egypt under the earlier Ptolemies present a much more interesting and ennobling record. The ancient country of the Nile entered on a new life after its conquest by Alexander the Great—a life which was to some extent a perpetuation of old forms, but which nevertheless received into itself the spirit of a more modern and more active civilization. The Egyptians had been oppressed, insulted, and browbeaten by their Persian conquerors. The religion of the Pharaohs was discouraged; the arts and sciences of an earlier epoch fell into decay; and nothing but the intense conservatism of the native population preserved their original character from extinction. But the Greeks and Macedonians who entered the country with Alexander the Great felt no dislike to the religious practices by which they were encountered. Idolaters themselves, they were disposed to view with sympathy all other idolatrous forms, and especially those of the old Egyptians, from which much of their own religious system was derived. The consequence is seen in a very curious action and re-action of the Greek and Egyptian mind on one another, and in the establishment at Alexandria of a centre of religious thought and speculation, which in a later age proved favourable to the development of Christianity. For some centuries, Alexandria was the most intellectual city in the world, and humanity itself has been a gainer by the singular intermixture of various schools of belief which resulted from the mingling of Greeks, Egyptians, and Asiatics, in the city founded by Alexander on the limits of an old, mysterious land, the fruitful mother of mythologies, of symbolism, and of dreams.

The later Egyptian kingdom was commenced in 323 B.C. by Ptolemy I., the reputed son of Lagus, on which account his successors are frequently called the Lagidæ. By many, however, he was believed to have been the son of Philip of Macedon; but in any case he was a commander of great distinction, and one of the principal generals of Alexander the Great. The wars of the first Ptolemy and his successors have already been sufficiently indicated in the history of the surrounding kingdoms, and it will now be mere

agreeable and more instructive to consider the influence of these monarchs over the internal prosperity of Egypt. Commerce was largely developed, and intercourse with foreigners systematically promoted. Although all such intercourse was strongly opposed to the ancient habits of the Egyptians, they seem to have offered no opposition to the larger policy of the Ptolemies. The natives themselves engaged in trade, became rich and prosperous, and, though living in a state of political subjection to their conquerors, were contented and loyal, because they were ruled with justice, and with a proper regard to their religious beliefs. Ptolemy I. established his authority over Palestine, Phœnicia, and Cœle-Syria, and the Jews settled in large numbers at Alexandria, where they enjoyed great privileges, and formed a distinct community, with its own organization and its own officers. Here was the introduction of another element into that wonderful combination of spiritual and mental influences which gives to Alexandria so marked and interesting a character in the history of the world. Ptolemy I. was distinguished by a noble liberality in matters of religion. He desired, indeed, to Hellenize Egypt, so far as that could be done without offending the prejudices of the people; and he seems to have been possessed with the idea that he could unite the Egyptian and Greek theologies in one common faith. But in the meanwhile, however much attached by prescription to the Hellenic ideas in which he had been brought up, he showed great respect to the Egyptian priesthood, and even contributed largely to the restoration of the ancient temples. The Jews also were permitted entire liberty of worship, so that the services of the synagogue went on side by side with those of the Egyptian and Hellenic deities. In several other respects, the character of the first Ptolemy was worthy of high praise. His generosity is recorded by ancient authors, and he is said to have observed that "it was better to *make* rich than to *be* rich." He frequently set his prisoners free without ransom, and, although a brave and successful soldier, was unstained by those acts of cruelty and revenge which were common to so many monarchs of the same epoch.

The system of government under the Ptolemies was undoubtedly despotic; but it was a despotism tempered by regard to ancient usages, and by a spirit of intelligent liberality. The old division of the country into nomes was maintained, and the heads of these divisions were generally Egyptians, who administered their provinces in accordance with native laws, and with a due respect to the native religion. Yet the general administration of the State was almost exclusively in the hands of Greeks and Macedonians, who formed the standing army and the official class. The army was stationed in only a few cities, and by far the greater number of the Greeks and Macedonians were settled at Alexandria. The mass of the Egyptian population had therefore very little sense of foreign rule, and it is doubtful if the Egyptians were ever happier than under the sway of the earlier Ptolemies. Ambition of conquest was not permitted to interfere with more important objects; yet the founder of the dynasty extended his power over the adjacent parts of Asia, and, in the opposite direction, acquired the extensive country of the Cyrenaïca, situated on the Mediterranean, beyond the great Libyan desert. It was not without considerable difficulty that Ptolemy I. established himself in this region; but when his general, Ophellas, who had been in occupation of Cyrene for some time, was treacherously slain by Agathocles, as previously related, Ptolemy made a fresh effort for the acquisition of the country, and placed it under the government of his son Magas. He appears also to have conquered the Libyan tribes occupying the district between Egypt and the Cyrenaïca, who had in former times been dependent on the Egyptian monarchy.

Still, it was not as a conqueror that Ptolemy I. mainly distinguished himself. It was rather as a wise and munificent sovereign, and as a patron of literature and science. He was himself an author, having composed a history of the wars of Alexander, the substance of which is preserved in the celebrated work of Arrian; and men of learning were always welcome at his court. Perceiving that the greatest glory of his kingdom would consist in intellectual culture, he invited scholars and philosophers from Greece, and founded a Museum, or College of Professors, which rapidly became celebrated over the whole civilized world, and received into itself the most earnest students of all nations. Among the great men connected with this university were Euclid and Apollonius of Perga, the mathematicians; Eratosthenes, the chronologist and geographer; Hipparchus, the astronomer; and Manetho, the historian. The public buildings constituting the Museum were of an ample and magnificent character, and attached to them were a botanical garden and a menagerie. As befitted a scholar and a man of intellect, the personal habits of Ptolemy were simple and unostentatious; but, on public and national grounds, he had a high sense of the glories of art. Apelles and Antiphilus produced several of their pictures at Alexandria, and the capital was adorned with many noble

buildings. One of the most famous of these was the lofty Pharos, or lighthouse, which Ptolemy built upon the narrow island forming the port. This edifice is said to have been four hundred feet high. It was constructed of white marble, and could be seen at an immense distance across the Mediterranean. Several stories rose one above another, enriched with columns, balustrades, and galleries; and Sostratus, the architect, provided the upper portion with a number of mirrors, so disposed that the watchers could see in them all the ships that were approaching or leaving the coast. The shores of the island being rocky and dangerous, fires were kept constantly burning, to direct the sailors in the bay; and the grandeur and completeness of this lighthouse were such that its name is frequently bestowed upon similar edifices in other parts of the world. Among the other great works either completed or begun by Ptolemy I. were the mausoleum, containing the body of Alexander; the temple of Serapis; the hippodrome, or race-course; and the inner chamber of the grand temple of Karnak. This monarch paid particular regard to the worship of Apis, who is supposed to be the god Osiris as manifested in the form of the sacred bull, while Serapis appears to be the same god considered with reference to his state after death. The final years of Ptolemy I. were embittered by his imprudence in divorcing his first wife, Eurydice, and marrying Berenice, her companion. Ptolemy Ceraunus, his son by the first of these wives, was put aside in favour of Philadelphus, a son by Berenice; and this preference, as the reader is aware, led to some miserable events. After a reign of forty years, the first of the Ptolemies died at Alexandria in 283 B.C., at the age of eighty-four.

Ptolemy II. (Philadelphus) perpetuated his father's love of literature and art. His military abilities were not conspicuous, and he was compelled to acknowledge the independence of his half-brother Magas, who had established himself as king of Cyrene. The material prosperity of Egypt, however, was very great during this reign, and it was due in a large measure to the policy of Philadelphus himself. It was he who re-opened the ancient canal which once united the Red Sea with the Nile, and who constructed the port of Arsinoe on the site of the modern Suez. By these great works, the commerce of the east and west was made to pass through the dominions of the Ptolemies; and to Philadelphus are also to be attributed two cities, both called Berenice, which he founded on different parts of the East African coast. Ivory was largely imported from Ethiopia, and great numbers of elephants were brought into Egypt, and employed in the service of the army. Theocritus, the Sicilian poet, visited the court of this sovereign, and in one of his Idyls has given an enthusiastic account of the Egyptian greatness as it then existed. From other sources it appears that the army consisted of 200,000 foot-soldiers, 40,000 horse, 300 elephants, and 2,000 war-chariots; that the fleet numbered 1,500 triremes, 800 ships magnificently adorned and equipped for royal use, and 2,000 smaller vessels; that the money in the treasury at the death of Ptolemy II. amounted to 740,000 Egyptian talents; and that the influence of the kingdom extended to Macedonia and Thrace. The maritime parts of Arabia were added to the empire, and Timosthenes, one of the admirals of this monarch, is believed to have sailed as far south as Madagascar. The trade with India and other parts of Eastern Asia was an immense source of wealth to Egypt, so that the people, though heavily taxed to maintain the grandeur of the State, were prosperous and happy.

In his literary tastes and accomplishments, the second Ptolemy was at least equal to the first. The great library commenced by his father was by him largely increased, and he formed a minor library at the Serapeum. The larger collection contained 100,000 volumes at the death of Ptolemy Philadelphus, and the number of books in the two libraries ultimately amounted to 700,000. Of these, the greater number were destroyed when Julius Cæsar was blockaded by the Alexandrians in the Brucheion, or Greek quarter; but the chief library was supplied anew by Cleopatra and others. One of the main intellectual achievements of the early Ptolemaic period was the translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into the Greek language, or rather the commencement of that work, for it was not concluded until a later epoch. This is the rendering which is known by the title of the Septuagint, and which for a long period was the version used in the larger part of the Christian Church. The origin of the name is to be found in the legend that the translation was made by seventy Elders, who had been sent from Jerusalem at the request of the first or second Ptolemy; or in the tradition that the work was accomplished in seventy-two days; or in the statement that it was finally approved by an Alexandrian Sanhedrim, or council of seventy. According to Irenæus, each of the seventy Elders made a separate translation, without any communication with the others, and, when all were compared, they were found to agree exactly in every phrase and word. A similar

story is told by Epiphanius, who, however, says that the translators were seventy-two in number; that they were divided into pairs, working in thirty-six cells; and that the thirty-six versions were absolutely identical. Jerome discredits these stories, and places reliance on an alleged letter of Aristeas, an officer at the court of Ptolemy Philadelphus, according to which the translation was performed by conference and comparison. The letter ascribed to Aristeas is not now regarded as genuine, and it is commonly believed by scholars that the version was executed gradually through a long series of years, and was the production of men who had an imperfect knowledge of Hebrew—probably of Hellenized Jews living at Alexandria, who made their version, for the most part, from the Chaldaic tongue, which, after the period of the captivity at Babylon, was more familiar to the Jews than their own language. Whatever its errors, however, the Septuagint will always remain a work of interest, as being the most ancient translation of the Scriptures, with the exception of the Chaldaic, and as presenting a variety of readings which are often of great value. It was the version employed by the Hellenized Jews, and is frequently quoted by the writers of the New Testament, as well as by Josephus and the early Christian Fathers.

Another celebrated work of the same reign was the History of Egypt, compiled from native records by the Egyptian priest Manetho, who wrote in Greek. As in the previous reign, the court of Egypt was made illustrious by the presence of many intellectual and famous Hellenes; but the personal character of Philadelphus was not equal to his father's. He adopted from the Egyptians that custom of incestuous marriages which was entirely alien to Greek ideas; and he put two of his brothers to death. Yet, notwithstanding these facts, his reign must be regarded on the whole as glorious; and when he died, in 247 B.C., he left the kingdom in a state of the highest prosperity. Ptolemy III., surnamed Euergetes, or the Benefactor, was a warlike monarch, who acquired new territories in Africa, Asia, and Europe. The Cyrenaïca was recovered by means of a marriage; but the other acquisitions resulted from a series of fortunate campaigns. Several of these provinces were lost shortly afterwards, but others were retained, and added to the grandeur, if not to the strength, of the kingdom. One of the latest conquests of Ptolemy III. was in Ethiopia, where he possessed himself of the coast about Adulé, and set up there a Greek inscription which is now lost, although, having been seen about the year 520 of the Christian era, its contents have been preserved in books.* Euergetes added largely to the great library at Alexandria, and several men of learning and genius were received at court, and encouraged by the royal favour. Various images of the Egyptian gods, previously carried off into Asia, were restored by this monarch, who made considerable additions to the great temple at Thebes, besides erecting a new temple at Esné, and dedicating one to Osiris at Canopus, in the joint names of himself and his wife Berenice. It would seem that by this time the Ptolemaic sovereigns of Egypt had to a great extent subordinated their Hellenic religion to that of the people over whom they reigned. At any rate, the earlier kings lost no opportunity of paying court to the prevalent religious sentiment; and this was one great cause of their popularity with the native race.

Egypt was never in a more enviable condition than during the quarter of a century when Ptolemy Euergetes occupied the throne. Counting the reigns of the first three Ptolemies, the country had been singularly prosperous and successful for a period of a hundred and one years; but with the death of Euergetes, in 222 B.C., this fortunate and brilliant epoch came to a close. The total number of the Ptolemies was thirteen, ten of whom were distinguished either by crime or imbecility. Under Ptolemy IV., the former loyalty of the Egyptians was greatly disturbed (though from what cause is not distinctly known), and a revolt broke out, which lasted several years. Vicious and debauched as was his life, Ptolemy IV. preserved the hereditary love of letters; was himself an author of tragedies and poems, and dedicated a temple to Homer. He died prematurely in 205 B.C., leaving the kingdom to his only child, a boy of five. The reign of Ptolemy V., known as Epiphanes, or the Illustrious, was characterized by several misfortunes, by which Egypt was stripped of all her foreign possessions, excepting Cyprus and the Cyrenaïca. Antiochus the Great of Syria, and the contemporary king of Macedon, were enemies against whom the regent acting on behalf of Ptolemy Epiphanes was unable to contend; and in 201 B.C. he was obliged to call in the assistance of the Romans, to save his kingdom from entire subjugation. The character of Epiphanes, when he grew up, was cruel and treacherous, and in 181 B.C. he was murdered by his officers. The reigns of the remaining Ptolemies present a miserable record of

* The Rosetta Stone (described on p. 69 of this volume) belongs to the reign of Ptolemy V.

unsuccessful wars, fierce revolts, acts of cruelty and vice, and frequent appeals to Rome for that support which Egypt was now incapable of rendering herself. From the time of Ptolemy VI. downwards, the great Republic exercised a sort of protectorate over the African kingdom, and was permitted to act as arbiter between rival princes, who went to Rome in person to plead their cause before the Senate. The latest of the Egyptian monarchs of this race was the superb and fascinating Cleopatra (51—30 B.C.), whose life we shall have to record in connection with the history of Rome, but of whom it may here be said that she gave a certain grandeur and dignity to the close of a royal house once reckoned amongst the most illustrious in the world, but afterwards ruined by every shame and wickedness which human nature is capable of committing.

CHAPTER L.

THE MINOR ASIATIC KINGDOMS.

Foundation of the Kingdom of Pergamus—Encouragement of Literature and Art by its Rulers—The Kingdoms of Bithynia and Paphlagonia—Pontus under Mithridates the Great—Annals of Cappadocia—Armenia Major and Armenia Minor—The Greek Kingdom of Bactria—Formation of Greek States in North-western India—Reign of Menander at Cabul—Rise of the Parthian Dominion—History of the later Jewish Kingdom, from the Rebellion of Mattathias to the Last of the Maccabees—The Overshadowing of Rome.

BEFORE finally dismissing the kingdoms into which the Persian Empire was divided after the death of Alexander, it is necessary to consider the fortunes of some which have as yet appeared but slightly on the scene. To several of these kingdoms no little importance attaches, in respect both of themselves and of the larger States with which they came in contact; but their annals are very imperfectly known. Still, the labours of modern inquirers have rescued somewhat from the obscurity of the past, and we are thus enabled to follow the main stream of events in various districts of Asia between the partition of the Macedonian Empire and the supremacy of Rome.

So far as Western Asia was concerned, the most important of the lesser kingdoms was Pergamus, situated north of Lydia, and towards the Ægean. The name was originally applied to a town in Mysia, which, being a place of great strength, both naturally and by reason of its fortifications, was chosen by Lysimachus of Thrace, when a large part of Asia Minor fell to his share, for the safe custody of his treasures. These treasures were placed under the guardianship of Philetærus, an eunuch, who, on the death of Lysimachus at the battle of Corupedion, in 281 B.C., seized the fortress for himself, and employed the wealth of his former master in hiring mercenaries, by whose aid he established an independent monarchy. After eighteen years of rule, Philetærus died, leaving his possessions to his nephew, Eumenes I., who was able to withstand the attacks of Antiochus I. of Syria. Not only did he defeat that prince, but he obtained an increase of territory; and the boundaries of Pergamus were still further enlarged by his successor, Attalus I.—a warlike, energetic, and prudent monarch, who acted as the ally of Rome, and, after a career of varying fortunes, bequeathed a powerful kingdom to his eldest son, Eumenes II. The reign of Attalus had extended over forty-four years, from 241 to 197 B.C.; and it was in many respects illustrious. Under this monarch, Pergamus first acquired celebrity as a seat of art and literature. The capital was adorned with splendid temples and other buildings, the ruins of which still exist. Sculpture and painting were encouraged, both by Attalus and his successors; an extensive public library was established; and Pergamus became famous for its grammatical and critical school. Parchment is said to have been invented in this city by Eumenes II., and thus to have derived its name of *Charta Pergamena*. The story is that Ptolemy Epiphanes forbade the exportation of papyrus from Egypt, in order that he might prevent the formation at Pergamus of a library equal to that of Alexandria, and that parchment, or dried goat-skin, was found to be even better adapted for books than the older material. It is doubtful, however, whether Eumenes did more than improve the art of dressing skins with this object; for the older Asiatic nations appear to have understood the process, and par-

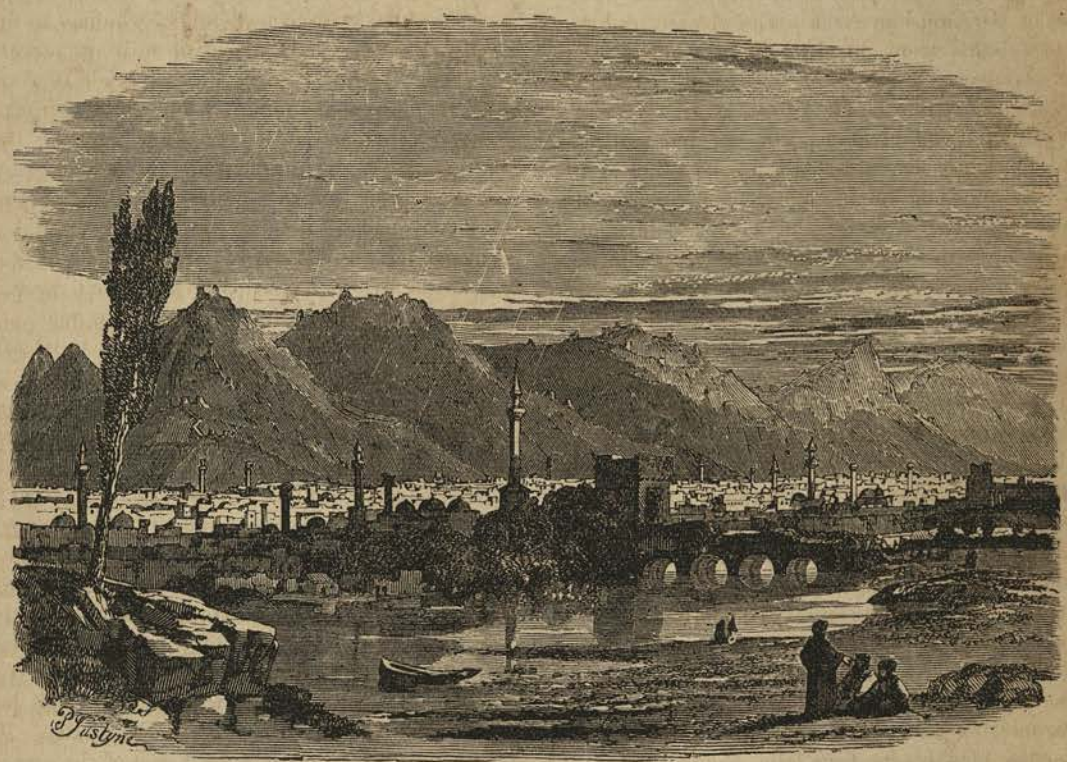
ment of a thousand years' earlier date than the second century B.C. is preserved in the British Museum.

Eumenes II. acquired vast additions to his kingdom, as the reward of his fidelity to Rome in her contest with Antiochus; for that Republic conferred on him the larger part of the territory of which the Syrian monarch had been deprived. The authority of Eumenes extended even to the Thracian Chersonese and the adjacent country, and, when he died in 159 B.C., Pergamus was one of the greatest kingdoms in Asia. The remaining kings of this realm were Attalus II. (159—138 B.C.), who was engaged in many wars with neighbouring lands; Attalus III. (138—133 B.C.); and Aristonicus (133—130 B.C.). An extraordinary series of crimes characterized the brief reign of the third Attalus, and by his will he left the Roman people his heir. Aristonicus, however, struggled hard to preserve the kingdom, and even inflicted a defeat on the Roman forces, but was crushed after a gallant resistance. Thus the monarchy came to an end, after about a century and a half of independence; but we hear of Pergamus again in early Christian times, as one of the Seven Churches of Asia to which St. John wrote in the Book of Revelation.

Bithynia, situated on the southern shores of the Euxine, and the eastern side of the Propontis, was for some ages a nominal satrapy of Persia, but on the decline of that empire acquired complete independence, and was extended so far eastward that it reached nearly to the river Parthenius. The earliest inhabitants of this beautiful country were probably analogous to those of Mysia and Phrygia; but they were afterwards mingled with Thracian immigrants from the European side of the Propontis. The invading tribe was called Bithyni; whence the name of the country. Whether owing to their valour, or to the situation of the land, the Bithynians preserved so much local independence under the dominion of the Persians that their native rulers had all the character of monarchs, and often conducted wars with the satraps of Asia Minor. Caranus, one of the generals of Alexander the Great, failed in an attempt to reduce this province, and the ruling prince, Bas, was able, at his death in 326 B.C., to leave a flourishing kingdom to his son, Zipœtes, who carried on a successful war with Lysimachus and Antiochus Soter. Very little is recorded of this king's immediate successors; but they appear to have extended their dominions by a series of military operations, often fortunate in their results. Prusias I., however, gave great offence to Rome by assisting Philip III. of Macedon in his first war against that Power, by attacking Eumenes of Pergamus, and by sheltering Hannibal, whom he was at length compelled to abandon. Prusias II. was deposed by his son Nicomedes II., who reigned fifty-eight years, from 149 to 91 B.C. Pressed on by the enormous weight of Rome, this prince resorted to intrigue and subterfuge for maintaining his independence, and, although he failed in enlarging the bounds of his kingdom, he at any rate held his position unimpaired to the end. He was succeeded by Nicomedes III., who had to fight for his existence with the great military power of Pontus, under Mithridates V., and would doubtless have been overwhelmed, but for the assistance of Rome. This was the occasion of the first Mithridatic War, at the close of which, in 84 B.C., Nicomedes was restored to his kingdom, from which Mithridates had driven him out. After a period of tranquillity, extending over ten years, Nicomedes died without issue in 74 B.C., leaving his kingdom to the Romans, who, however, were not able to obtain full possession of it until after the third Mithridatic War.

Paphlagonia, another country of Asia Minor, lying on the Euxine to the east of Bithynia, also enjoyed a species of independence under the Persian sovereigns, but was afterwards seized by Mithridates II. of Pontus, and did not regain its freedom until after many years. In 200 B.C., however, the throne was once more occupied by a native prince, and Paphlagonia continued to preserve its autonomy until 102 B.C., when Mithridates V. of Pontus, and Nicomedes II. of Bithynia, took possession of the country, which eight years later passed wholly under the rule of Mithridates. The kingdom of Pontus was, indeed, one of the greatest of these Asiatic kingdoms. It was originally a portion of Cappadocia—that part which lay along the coast, and which was therefore called Pontus by the Greeks; but it was formed into a separate State by Ariobarzanes, son of the ruling satrap, who rebelled in 363 B.C., and established a distinct kingdom. His son, Mithridates I., occupied the throne at the time of the Macedonian invasion of Persia, and was for a while compelled to make submission to the European strangers. After the death of Alexander, however, he resumed his sovereignty, and maintained his power from 318 to 302 B.C., when Antigonus, having reason to believe that he was about to join the league against him, caused him to be assassinated. The next five kings of Pontus conducted several wars with a fair proportion of success; but the events of their reigns are not sufficiently conspicuous to

need recapitulation here. In 120 B.C., the throne was occupied by the most famous of all the Pontic kings—Mithridates V., surnamed the Great. This remarkable man ascended the throne while he was still a minor, and his reign lasted to the year 63 B.C.—a period of fifty-seven years. It was not until about 112 B.C. that he could act with any freedom; but in the meanwhile he had trained himself for the duties of his office by the study of languages (of which he is said to have mastered



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twenty-five), and by hunting expeditions in wild and difficult regions. Unlike most of the monarchs in that part of Asia, Mithridates did not make himself the slave of Rome, but, on the contrary, perceived from an early date that his only hope of preservation was in strengthening himself so as to meet that formidable Republic upon something like equal terms. He therefore began a series of Oriental conquests in 112 B.C., and, after about seven years of successful war, added to his dominions the Lesser Armenia, Colchis, the eastern coast of the Black Sea, the Chersonesus Taurica (now the Crimea), and the whole country westward as far as the Tyras, or Dniester. In thus extending his rule towards the East, he knew that he should avoid giving offence to Rome, which he was not yet strong enough to defy. All his plans, nevertheless, tended towards an ultimate collision with that State; and for this reason he concluded alliances with the wild tribes on the Danube, and contracted marriages between his relations and neighbouring monarchs whose support he considered might be useful to him. The first Mithridatic War began in 88 B.C., and was occasioned by the invasion of Pontus by Nicomedes III. of Bithynia, who was encouraged in his proceedings by Rome. This was followed by two other wars with the same Power, commencing in 83 and 74 B.C. respectively. In all three struggles, Mithridates exhibited extraordinary heroism, determination, and skill; but the details form so important a feature in the history of Rome that they must be deferred to another place. The Pontic king was at length completely worsted, and in 65 B.C. retreated to Panticapæum, in the Chersonesus Taurica, where he temporarily established himself; but, having shortly afterwards signified his intention of making a fourth attack on the Roman dominions, a conspiracy was formed against him by his son Pharnaces, and the old king, despairing of any further success, caused himself to be despatched by one of his own guards, in the year 63 B.C.

The greater part of Pontus then became a Roman province; but a small portion still continued to be ruled by native princes until the time of Nero.

The kingdom of Cappadocia was commenced about 315 B.C. by a chieftain named Ariarathes, the nephew of a previous satrap, who expelled the Macedonians, and declared the independence of the country. The history of this kingdom is not very remarkable, and is, for the most part, mixed up with that of the other nations of Western Asia, and with the steady advance of Roman power. One of the Cappadocian kings, however, deserves mention on account of his noble character. This was Ariarathes Philopator, so called because of the affection which he bore his father. He was a student of philosophy, a patron of learned men, and a person of so blameless a life that history has not preserved one single charge against him. He refused to augment his dominions by the appropriation of a neighbouring kingdom to which he had no claim, and against which he could allege no quarrel; and his fidelity to Rome was unshaken throughout a long reign. The affection of his own subjects was the well-earned reward of his equity and benevolence; but he was for a time deprived of his dominions by a pretender whom Demetrius I. of Syria had raised up against him. The Romans, however, soon restored Ariarathes to his throne, and he lost his life in battle on behalf of the Western Republic, in 131 B.C., after a reign of thirty-one years. Cappadocia retained a species of independence for more than three centuries; but it became a Roman province in the year 17 of the Christian era.

Among the Asiatic countries subjected by Alexander was the vast mountainous territory of Armenia. Of this land we have some few particulars in much earlier ages, when a powerful monarchy was established to the north of Assyria. The Assyrian kings made frequent war on the Armenians, but for a long while appear to have been defeated and driven back. One of the Armenian kings, however, fell in a war with Semiramis, and Armenia then became dependent on the Assyrian throne, though still retaining its native princes as a kind of vassals. About the middle of the eighth century B.C., these princes threw off their allegiance, and Armenia was once more independent. The natives of the country were hardy and warlike, and a corps of Armenians formed part of the Persian army in the Grecian expedition of Xerxes. When Alexander the Great invaded Persia, Vahey, the reigning king of Armenia, assisted Darius in opposing the Macedonians, but fell in battle, in 328 B.C. Armenia next became a Macedonian province, and was ruled by governors, the first of whom was a Persian named Mithrines. In 317 B.C., however, the Armenians expelled the foreigners, and established an independent kingdom, which lasted some years. After the battle of Ipsus, in 301 B.C., Armenia formed a portion of the Syrian kingdom ruled by the Seleucidæ; but when Antiochus the Great was defeated by the Romans, in 190 B.C., the people divided the country into two kingdoms—Armenia Major and Armenia Minor: the former seated on the eastern, and the latter on the western, side of the Euphrates. The principal Armenian monarchy was founded by Artaxias, a general of Antiochus the Great, who, after reigning about twenty-five years, was defeated and made prisoner by Antiochus Epiphanes. This was about 165 B.C., and Armenia Major was thus re-absorbed in the Syrian Empire, though for how long does not appear. In 100 B.C., the throne was occupied by a native king, who, four years later, was succeeded by Tigranes I., a monarch of great courage and genius, who gave considerable extension to his kingdom, and converted it into a formidable power. For three years he waged war with Rome, but was ultimately compelled to make submission, and found himself reduced to the original limits of his kingdom. As a reward for his subsequent fidelity to Pompey, he received some additions to his realm, and was enabled to maintain himself against the antagonism of the Parthians until the year 55 B.C., when he died. His son and successor, Artavasdes I., acted at times as the ally, and at other times as the enemy, of Rome, and was at length seized by Marc Antony, and delivered into the hands of Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt, by whom, in 30 B.C., he was put to death. The independence of Armenia Major did not last much longer. The country became an object of contention between the Romans and the Parthians, who alternately installed and dethroned its rulers; yet a nominal independence was still kept up until the reign of Trajan, when, in the year 114 of our era, Armenia Major became a portion of the Roman Empire. The same fate had attended Armenia Minor forty-one years earlier, after a history which presents no special points of interest.

Considerable importance attaches to the kingdom of Bactria, which was formed out of the dominions of the Seleucidæ about 255 B.C. The independent government was created by the satrap Diodotus, a man of Greek race, of whom very little is known. At his death, in 237 B.C., he left the crown to his son Diodotus II., who helped the Parthians in repelling the attacks of Syria. Another dynasty

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(also Greek) succeeded to the throne of Bactria about 222 B.C. Euthydemus, the founder of this dynasty, was assailed by Antiochus the Great, but, although defeated, was able to make favourable terms in 206 B.C. Demetrius, the son of Euthydemus, began shortly afterwards to invade the Indian territory, and, crossing the Paropamisus, or Hindoo-Koosh, made some conquests in the modern Candahar and Cabul. Thenceforward, the history of Bactria is a good deal associated with that of Hindoostan, and the annals of an obscure region are again illuminated by a few transient gleams of light. Demetrius succeeded his father about 200 B.C., and is thought to have extended his conquests into portions of India. He is supposed to have died in 180 B.C., and his successor, Eucratides, who reigned some twenty years, carried his power into the very heart of the Punjâb. He was waylaid and slain by his son, Heliocles, on his return from an Indian expedition. This son, who, as if to cover his crime, assumed the title of the Just, reigned over Bactria from 160 to 150 B.C. He had previously been associated with his father in the government of the kingdom, and the motive of his crime was that he might reign with undivided power. The influence of Bactria, however, declined rapidly in his hands, and repeated invasions of the Scythians and Parthians deprived Heliocles of some of his best provinces. The Bactrian Greeks, feeling that they would shortly be overwhelmed, implored aid of their Syrian brethren, and Demetrius Nicator conducted an expedition to their relief in 142 B.C., but with such ill-success that he was defeated and captured. The Hellenes of this distant region were in time subdued, and Bactria ceased to be a Grecian kingdom. On the other side of the Paropamisus, however, some Greek States continued to exist in Cabul and Candahar. Of the sovereigns ruling there, the most important was Menander, who lived about 140 B.C., and is thought to have reigned at the city of Cabul. He appears to have brought into subjection the whole country extending from the Paropamisus in the north to the Indian Ocean in the south, and from the neighbourhood of Herat to the Jumna, a tributary of the Ganges.* This was a dominion of great extent and magnificence, and Menander is believed to have governed it for about five-and-twenty years. The use of the Greek language, though in a very debased form, lasted in Afghanistan to the close of the fourth Christian century, and large numbers of Greek coins have been found in that country, as well as in various parts of India, even to the banks of the Jumna. Greek ideas in religion, strangely blended with others of Hindoo and Scythian origin, appear to have lasted in these regions until some time after the Christian era; but the Greeks, as a dominant race, and as an intellectual power, gave way before the onslaught of barbarians from the North.

Of the Parthian kingdom we shall have so much to say further on, that it would be superfluous to enter into its annals in the present place; but it may here be mentioned that it was bounded on the north by Hyrcania, on the south by Carmania, on the east by Aria, and on the west by Media, and that it arose about the same time as the Bactrian monarchy. The people were of Scythic or Turanian origin, and were assisted in establishing their independence by a body of Turanians from beyond the Jaxartes. The Parthians had been subject to the Persian monarchy, and afterwards to that of Alexander. On the division of the latter empire, they were included in the dominions of the Seleucidæ, but in 256 B.C. threw off the authority of the Syrian kings, and formed a separate government, under the rule of Arsaces I., from whom their succeeding monarchs received the title of the Arsacidæ. The realm thus established grew in time to be one of the largest in that part of the world, and included all the countries between the Euphrates and the Sutlej.

Judæa, after the fall of Tyre, was yielded by the High Priest Jaddua to Alexander the Great; and in the partition of Alexander's dominions, first at Babylon, and afterwards at Triparadisus, this venerable and interesting land was included in the Syrian government. Very shortly after the latter division, however—viz., in 320 B.C.—Judæa was annexed to Egypt, and, being at first considerately ruled, remained a loyal portion of that kingdom to the time of Ptolemy Epiphanes. Ptolemy Philopator, the predecessor of that monarch, had exasperated the Jews by his wanton violations of their religion, and his cruelty towards their race; so that in 203 B.C., when Epiphanes was still in his infancy, they placed themselves under the protection of Antiochus the Great of Syria. But by Seleucus Philopator and Antiochus Epiphanes these unfortunate people were treated with so much rigour that they rose in rebellion, as related in a previous chapter, and, after a period of great suffering and bloodshed, commencing in 168 B.C., established a monarchy under Judas Maccabæus, son of the priest Mattathias, who had led the revolt. On obtaining the mastery of Judæa, this religious leader took care to purify the

* Rawlinson's Manual of Ancient History.

Temple, which had been polluted by the idolatries enforced by Antiochus Epiphanes. An annual feast of eight days was established in commemoration of the event; but Judas Maccabæus did not forget his duties as a warrior. No popular chieftain has ever shown greater genius as a commander; for not only did he repeatedly defeat the armies of Antiochus, but he repelled the attacks of neighbouring idolatrous nations in a series of campaigns, during which he had the assistance of his brothers Simon and Jonathan. A third brother, Eleazar Savaran, died heroically in a great battle against the Greeks of Syria; and Judas Maccabæus himself perished in a subsequent encounter, fought in 160 B.C. The popular cause suffered immensely by this untoward event; for it was not easy to find another champion of equal enthusiasm and equal capacity with the founder of the Maccabees. The power he had acquired was lost at his death, and his successors had much difficulty in maintaining themselves against their former oppressors, until the frequent civil wars in Syria so weakened the resources of that State that the Jews were enabled to secure their independence. Even then, they for some time acknowledged a right of suzerainty in the Syrian monarchs, to whom they paid tribute; but after the death of Antiochus VII. (Sidetes), in 129 B.C., they appear to have omitted all such payments, and to have asserted a dignified position among the kingdoms of Western Asia. The flourishing dynasty of the Maccabees lasted to 37 B.C., when it was superseded by that of the Herods, who were simply the nominees of Rome. Under the earlier Maccabees, Judæa became a powerful monarchy, and John Hyrcanus, who ruled from 135 to 106 B.C., enlarged his dominions by the conquest of Idumæa and Samaria, though in the first part of his reign he had been forced to acknowledge the authority of Antiochus Sidetes, to dismantle Jerusalem, and to pay tribute to the Syrian king. Up to this point, the history of the later Jewish monarchy is little else than a record of desperate struggles for existence with the military power of the Seleucidæ; but, after the death of Sidetes, the Jews, no longer menaced from without, fell to quarrelling among themselves on questions of religion, or of the succession to the throne. It was these civil wars which first brought in the Roman Republic as an arbiter between contending factions; and, from that time forward, Judæa, like so many other countries, was drawn within the mighty orbit of the Imperial Power whose rise, development, and decline, now spread before us like a rich and spacious land.

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